QUARTEY-VARGAS: OUR ANALYSIS & PREDICTION

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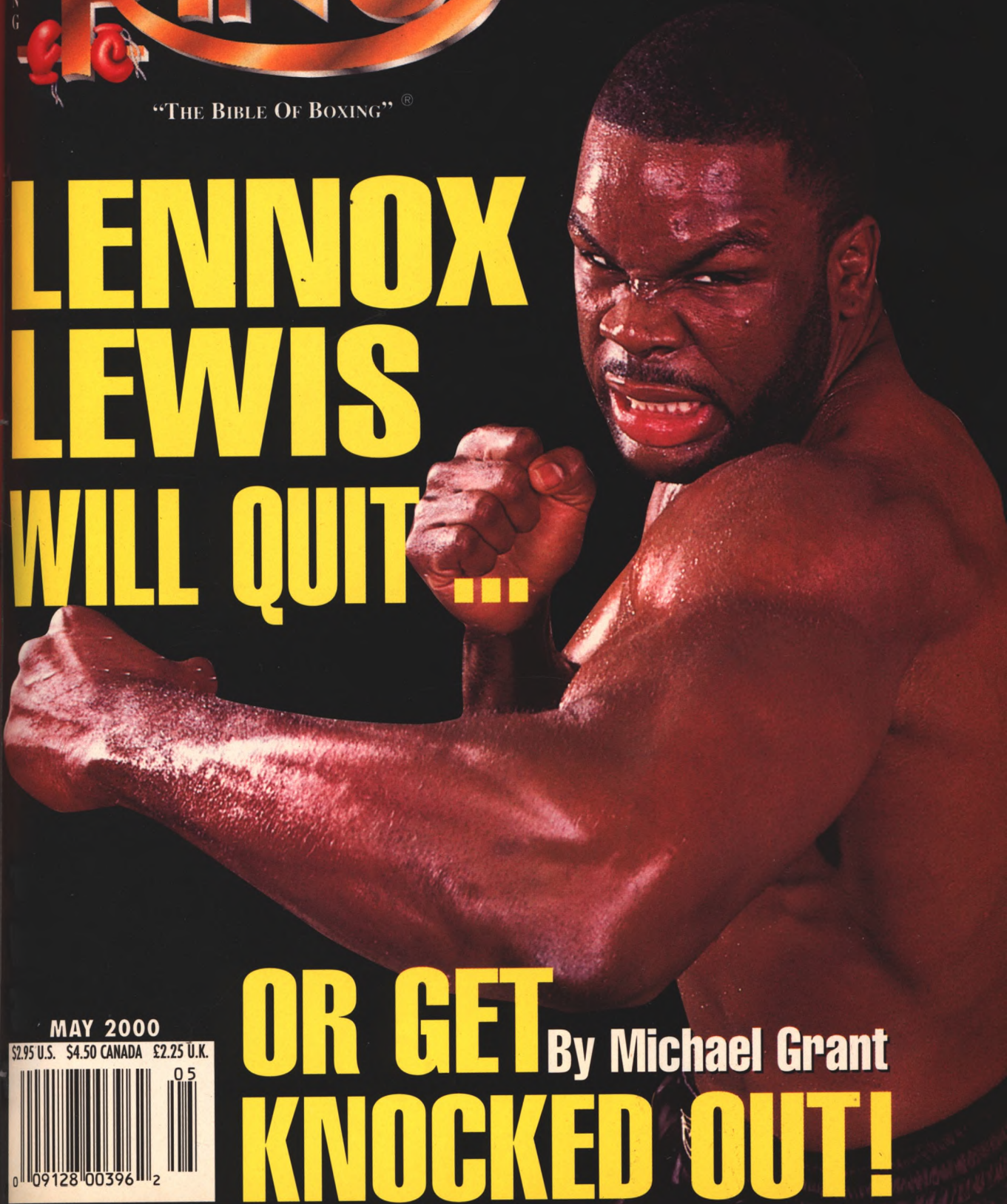

LENNOX LEWIS WILL QUIT ...

OR GET KNOCKED OUT!

By Michael Grant

MAY 2000
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RINGSIDE

I'm not sure if it was a case of miscommunication, incompetence, or something more sinister, but there's little doubt that Terronn Millett got the shaft when the IBF vacated the junior welterweight title he'd won by knocking out Vince Phillips last year.

The problem stemmed from an occupational injury to Millett's right hand that required surgery. When the IBF received notification from Millett's doctor, then-IBF President Bob Lee wrote to Millett, in care of his promoter Don King, saying that "Consistent with the rules governing a champion's inability to participate for medical reasons, Mr. Millett will be placed on medical suspension for 90 days or until he is cleared by his physician to fight."

Even though Jab Zudah had won the IBF's so-called "interim title" months earlier, Millett figured his belt was safe until his hand healed and he was ready to defend against Judah. But he figured wrong.

Main Events, the company that promotes Judah, pressed the IBF to vacate the 140-pound title and sanction a match between Judah and Jan Bergman for the title. Hiawatha G. Knight, who had replaced Lee when he stepped down in order to prepare for his trial on racketeering charges, agreed to do so. It was a move that certainly took Millett by surprise, and a flurry of faxes flew back and forth between Millett, King, Main Events, and the IBF. But just before this issue went to press, the IBF confirmed that the title was indeed vacant and that Judah and Bergman would be fighting for Millett's old belt.

As part of the deal, the IBF said that Millett would become the "mandatory leading contender" providing he is "physically fit and prepared to fight in a timely fashion." Superficially, this sounds fair: The title doesn't stagnate while Millett is convalescing, and he gets the first crack at the winner. But a closer look reveals that Millett will suffer a huge financial loss, especially if an eventual fight between him and the Judah-Bergman winner goes to purse bids. As champion, Millett would have received 75 percent of the winning bid, but as challenger, he gets only 25 percent. Even if the fight doesn't go to purse bids, Millett stands to lose a small fortune. As world champion, his contract with King guarantees a minimum purse approximately 20 times larger than it does if he's not a champion. Therefore, regardless of how a bout between Millett and the new IBF titlist is arranged, Millett will earn nowhere near what he would as defending champion.

Just how good of a job King, and Millett's manager, Carl King, did protecting their fighter is a matter of opinion. But it's clear that they did not do as good a job as Main Events did protecting Judah.

There are several lessons to be learned from what happened to Millett, not the least of which is that every fighter should have independent legal representation, because when a fighter shares counsel with his manager and/or promoter, divided loyalties are difficult to avoid. But the problem goes beyond this particular case and ultimately leads back to the alphabet groups that are destroying boxing.

Except under extraordinary circumstances, titles should be won and lost in the ring. Before the advent of these self-appointed, self-serving organizations, that's how boxing worked. Sure, a worthy contender was ducked from time to time, but by and large, if public demand was great enough, a match was made.

Fans are genuinely excited about Judah and want to see him get a crack at a title, and that's as it should be. But when an alphabet organization mugs a champion before he gets into the ring, it only cheapens the title Judah (or any challenger) is trying to win.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

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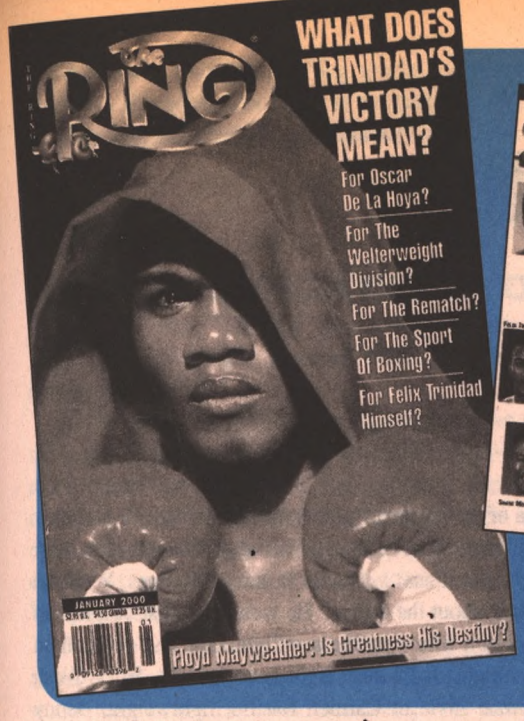

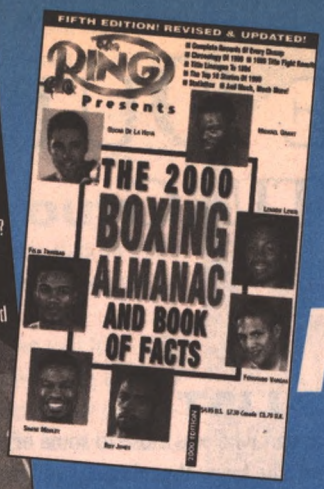

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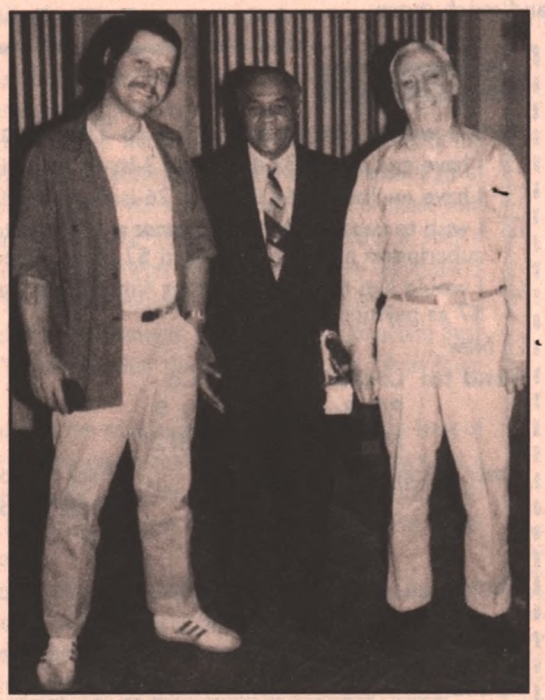
CARBO'S LIST

I came to know a man who was close to some of the greatest fighters that ever lived. He not only knew all these fighters, he knew them better and longer than most experts today. The man I'm talking about is Frankie Carbo. I had breakfast, lunch, and dinner with him at least 300 times. When he would see me, he'd say, "Mack, I don't want to talk about the fights." He would say that because all I wanted to talk about was the fights. I used to ask him who were the best fighters in any division on their best day. This is what he gave me: heavyweight, Joe Louis; light heavyweight, Billy Conn; middleweight, Marcel Cerdan; welterweight, Fritzie Zivic or Carmen Basilio; lightweight, Benny Leonard; featherweight, Willie Pep; bantamweight, Manuel Ortiz; and flyweight, Jimmy Wilde.

Carbo used to say that if Cerdan had not been killed in that plane wreck, nobody would know who Sugar Ray Robinson was. Ray Robinson holds the record for losing title fights (undisputed world title fights). He also ducked Bobby Boyd, Charley Burley, and Joey Giardello. Robinson finally fought Giardello and got beat after he was finished and no longer held the title.

I once asked Henry Armstrong who was the best fighter he ever faced. His answer was Fritzie Zivic.

JEFF McCRACKEN
Anchorage, AK



Frankie Carbo, a noted underworld figure and prominent boxing powerbroker, is pictured on the right with three-division former champion Henry Armstrong and reader Jeff McCracken (left). Carbo spoke at length with McCracken about the fighters he believed were the best of all-time in the respective weight classes.

DON'T GLORIFY BENN-McCLELLAN

Nigel Benn-Gerald McClellan was not one of the 10 greatest fights of the decade ("The Top 10 Fights Of The 1990s," February 2000). It was not even close. In fact, categorically, it was one of the worst. Gerald McCellan is a near-vegetable as a result of that fight, and just because McClellan fought well that night does not permit us to perceive that evening as anything other than tragic. It is not homage to McClellan that we do so, as the severity of what happened should not be diluted.

As boxing fans, part of what we appreciate is pain, the ability to accept and receive it, but that appreciation needs some limits. The object of a fight is not to permanently harm an opponent, but that line is blurred when we glorify McClellan's bout with Benn. Boxing, more than other sports, requires its fans to be emotionally intelligent. When a fight crosses the line of ordinary sports injury, as it did with McClellan, we have to change gears.

The kayo is exciting. A wounded fighter

going down or finding something special inside to keep going is climactic. But permanent injury is a catastrophe. When we realize a fighter may be seriously hurt, ethically, all else must go out the window.

ADAM JACOBSON
New York, NY

OSCAR CHICKENED OUT

Why did Oscar "Chicken" De La Hoya lose his fight to Felix "Tito" Trinidad? Simple: In a sport of machos, Trinidad wound up having more *cojones*.

At the end of the 10th round, Chicken's trainer told him: "No more rounds like this one!" But he could not deliver. He had two more rounds like that one! He had no Plan B when in the championship rounds—the ones that separate the men from the children—Tito kept coming at De La Hoya, energized by his tremendous heart and his promise to Puerto Rico that he would bring the WBC belt home.

Chicken lost because he was becoming arm-weary and was afraid of being knocked out if he got off his skates. (He probably would have been.) He would not dare go for broke. His lack of *cojones* kept him from doing so.

This was a shameful defeat for a man who represents such a great and proud group of people—those of Mexican origin. I am glad I belong to the other side. Tito's self-confidence, courage, and determination are a source of pride and inspiration for all Puerto Ricans.

GILBERTO PAGAN
Perth Amboy, NJ

BOXING ADVISORY

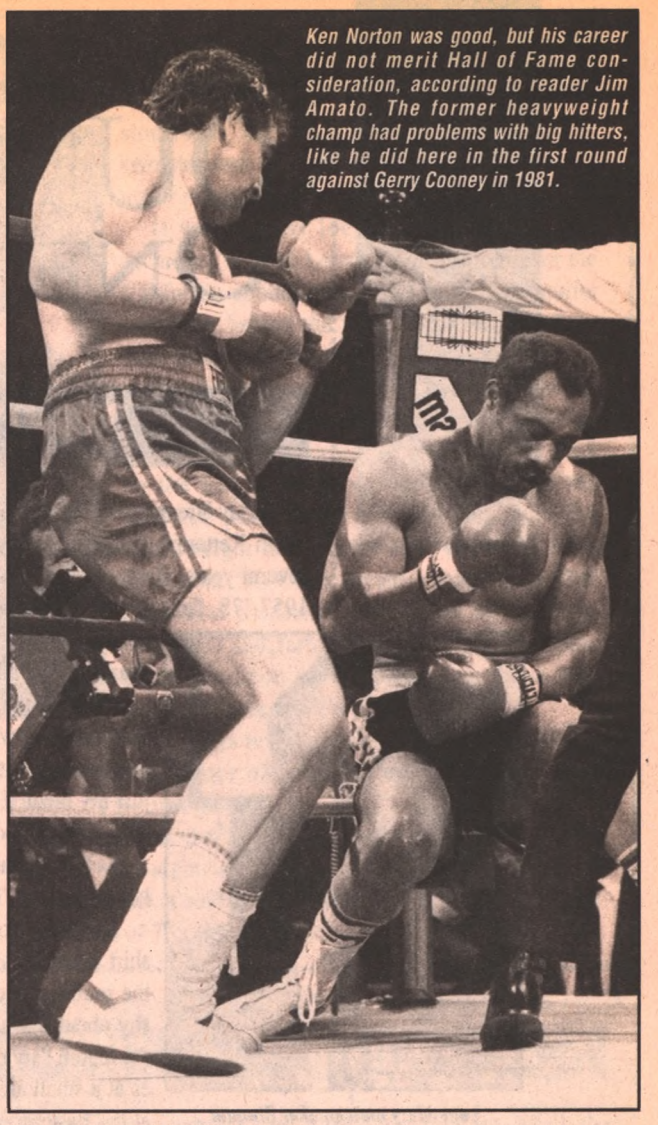
I have enjoyed reading your magazine for 15 years now and would like to give other readers a bit of advice. With all the poor judging we see in boxing today, it is easy to get fed up with the whole sport and throw in the towel. What I do to keep myself from getting aggravated is simple: I get a cold drink, sit in my reclining chair, and enjoy the fight. While watching, if I see Don King's name on the canvas or ringpost, as soon as the bell rings for the last round, I turn off the TV and go to bed. This way I get one good night's sleep before being aggravated by the results in the sports page the next day.

ANTHONY MARCUCILLI
Oakland, NJ

HOW GREAT WAS NORTON?

Seven-and-a-half years ago, the very personable and popular Ken Norton was enshrined in boxing's Hall of Fame. It couldn't have happened to a nicer guy. I met Ken a couple of years ago in Canastota. His rapport with the fans and willingness to mingle and sign autographs endeared him to the crowd. Being an ambassador for boxing is one thing, but being a Hall of Fame caliber boxer is another. After watching Jimmy Bivins wait for years to be rightfully inducted, it made me wonder what the qualifications really are. Did Norton really deserve to be enshrined? Let's examine his career.

Norton began his career in a promising fashion, reeling off an unbeaten streak against mediocre opposition. He was beginning to gain recognition as a top prospect until the roof caved in. A wiry Venezuelan named Jose Luis Garcia bombed Norton out and forced him to start all over again. It took some time, but Norton reestablished himself with tough victories over men like Jack O'Halloran and Henry Clark. Norton was ranked, but no one gave him a chance when he met ex-champion Muhammad Ali in March 1973. In a fight that will be forever remembered as "The Jawbreaker," Norton walked off with the upset decision, and Ali left to have his jaw wired. Their September rematch saw a better-conditioned Ali, who won a very close verdict.



Ken Norton was good, but his career did not merit Hall of Fame consideration, according to reader Jim Amato. The former heavyweight champ had problems with big hitters, like he did here in the first round against Gerry Cooney in 1981.

Norton would have two more shots at the undisputed title. First, he got bombed out in two rounds against George Foreman, then lost an unpopular decision to Ali at Yankee Stadium in their rubber match.

In reality, Norton lived off his reputation earned in his trio of bouts with Ali. For some reason, Norton always proved troublesome to Ali. But when he faced a big puncher, he was usually sent home early, such as in bouts with Foreman, Earnie Shavers, and Gerry Cooney. Norton was a very good heavyweight, make no mistake about it. But he was not a great heavyweight.

JIM AMATO
Ashland, OH ■

ROUND ONE

TEDDY BRENNER, 1917-2000

Teddy Brenner, who is generally regarded as the all-time dean of matchmakers, died at Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital in New York on January 7 after suffering from Parkinson's disease for several years. Brenner, 82, was best known for his association with Madison Square Garden from 1957-'78, first as the matchmaker, then as president of the boxing department. His crowning achievement was bringing the epic first battle between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier to the fabled arena on March 8, 1971.

Legendary matchmaker Brenner early in his MSG tenure

"He was the true spirit of MSG," said Bruce Trampler, the current matchmaker for Top Rank who apprenticed under Brenner at the Garden for several years. "His involvement with the Garden just perpetuated its mystique and prestige. He was not just my mentor; he was simply the best matchmaker there ever was. Being around him, it was impossible not to learn."

Said Top Rank President Bob Arum: "Teddy was a great person and a fantastic boxing person. There will never be another matchmaker equal to him."

Brenner's roots in the sport were far from conventional. While working as a shirt salesman after serving in the Navy during World War II, he regularly attended the multitudes of fight cards throughout the New York metropolitan area. Never shy about discussing his ideal matchups with promoters, he was the originator of the axiom "styles make fights." He was soon given the opportunity to make matches at a small arena in New Brunswick, New Jersey. That led to a matchmaking job at the Eastern Parkway Arena in Brooklyn, followed by a stint at St. Nick's Arena on the West Side of Manhattan.

Because Brenner was a firm believer in not making any fight that he would not want to see as a fan, St. Nick's soon became known as the House of Upsets. While at St. Nick's in 1962, he introduced New York fans to a brash, young upstart named Cassius Clay. Brenner matched him with Sonny Banks, who knocked the soon-to-be Greatest down early before being stopped in the fourth round. Brenner detailed many of the more colorful incidents of his storied career in a 1981 book he wrote with Barney Nagler called *When Only The Ring Was Square*.

Brenner was the first person to pitch the idea of weekly fights to ESPN, when it was a still a fledgling station. Brenner served as their matchmaker for most of the '80s until slowed down by radiation treatments for cancer.

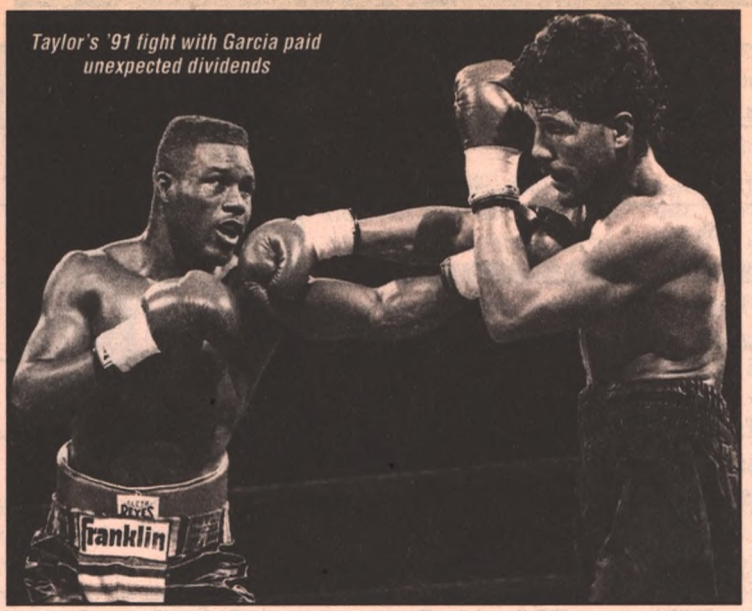
Trampler last saw Brenner in June. As they watched a ballgame at Brenner's midtown New York apartment, it was obvious to Trampler that his mentor, who was confined to a wheelchair, was in physical agony. Although sitting shoulder to shoulder with his protege, Brenner called over his wife, Judith, and said, "Tell Bruce I love him and appreciate him being here, but I am in great pain."

"It was his way of saying goodbye," said Trampler. "I don't mean to be melodramatic, but as I was going down the elevator I knew that I had seen him alive for the last time. I was very sad, but then realized how merciful death would be for him. Teddy was always such a robust, vigorous guy. To be apartment-bound for the last decade must have been torture for him. He was larger than life. I'll be in awe of him until the day I die."

In addition to his wife, Brenner is survived by his son Richard, daughter Marsha, brother Albert, and five grandchildren.

—Robert Mladinich

PAYBACK TIME



Taylor's '91 fight with Garcia paid unexpected dividends

Almost 1,000 fighters, most of them retired and many of them down on their luck, received a pleasant surprise shortly before Christmas when the California State Athletic Commission announced that it would be returning approximately $900,000 in pension money. The money had been collected from the purses of boxers who fought in the state between 1981 and 1995, but due to a change in the way pension funds will be administered in the future, refunds were due to those who had contributed under the old plan.

It wasn't easy locating the fighters, but according to Dean Lohuis, chief inspector for the California commission, the boxing community really got behind the search, and most of them were eventually found—some of them in jail.

The leading recipient was two-division former champion Meldrick Taylor, who, due to the interest that had accrued, received $33,991 back on the $15,000 that was deducted from the $500,000 purse he got for defending the WBA welterweight title against Luis Garcia in Palm Springs in '91. Other payouts ranged from $100 to several thousand, with Oscar De La Hoya ($24,000) and former cruiserweight champion Carlos DeLeon ($12,999) among those who received the largest checks.

"A lot of these guys really needed the money, and it was great to be the bearer of good news for a change," said Lohuis. "I felt like Santa Claus."

From now on, the California boxers pension fund will be financed by charging a flat rate of approximately 80 cents on every fight ticket sold in the state. Fighters will have to box a minimum of 75 rounds in a four-year period to be eligible.

OVER BOARD?

The future regulation of boxing in Britain is uncertain after the British Boxing Board of Control was sent into administration on December 21. The sport's governing body for the last 70 years in the country that gave boxing its long-standing rules laid down by the Marquis of Queensbury, the non-profit Board was forced onto the ropes by a High Court judgment that held it liable for the brain injuries Michael Watson received in a fight against Chris Eubank nine years ago. Watson, reported to have lost half of the functioning power of his brain and paralyzed on his left side, maintained he did not receive proper medical attention at ringside in the fateful 1991 super middleweight showdown in London.

A High Court judge put the BBBC in receivership, with national accounting group Hacker Young acting as administrators, after the Board was unable to pay the £1-million awarded to Watson in the landmark case. Costs from the case, which the Board must also pay, may settle at around £300,000. An appeal is in place against the court's ruling, but the administrators' primary purpose is to "achieve the survival of the board as the regulatory body in professional boxing in Great Britain."

Watson: Settlement spells big trouble for the BBBC

Should the Board lose its biggest fight, it would surely be revived, as the sport must have a regulatory body. Lawyers for Watson have told the courts that the BBBC could comfortably pay the £1-million—a suggestion the Board denies—saying it receives four percent of the purses of 200 fights annually.

"In winning his case for compensation, Michael Watson proved the incompetence of the Board's medical provisions," said neurosurgeon Peter Hamlyn, who treated the stricken fighter. "Boxing is a sport made filthy by needless deaths and disability. It could be rescued, though this now requires help and supervision rather than further prosecution."

—Brian Doogan

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
1-7-00	Israel Vazquez W 8 Edel Ruiz	ESPN2	jf	D	B+	C+
Hard-punching Vazquez bulls way to lopsided decision win						
1-7-00	Juan Lazcano W 10 Julian Wheeler	ESPN2	l	C+	B	C
"Hispanic Causing Panic"? More like "Hispanic Getting Undeserved Hometown Decisions"						
1-8-00	Frans Botha KO 1 Steve Pannell	Show	h	C-	D+	D-
Pannell wasn't hurt when he went down three times; he was laughing at Botha's new platinum hair						
1-8-00	Johnny Tapia W 12 Jorge Eliecer Julio	Show	b	A	B+	A-
We don't know when Tapia was better, during the fight or during the postfight interview						
1-9-00	Mauricio Pastrana W 10 Ablorh Sowah	FOXSN	b	B+	C+	B-
Pastrana gives away early rounds, gets penalized two points, and still wins solid verdict						
1-9-00	Greg Wright W 12 Darrell Spinks	FOXSN	lh	C+	B+	D-
Wright jabs and pokes his way to easy win over punchless Spinks						
1-14-00	Frankie Swindell D 10 Ross Puritty	ESPN2	h	C	B	C+
Swindell proves that short, obese, and 36 is not a death sentence						
1-14-00	**Irene Pacheco KO 11 Pedro Pena**	**ESPN2**	**IBF fl**	**B+**	**B**	**B+**
Anyone else think Pacheco might be a Eusebio Pedroza in the making?						
1-14-00	Ron Guerrero KO 2 Ryan Brieske	ESPN2	h	D+	A	B
You've never heard of these guys, but the knockout was highlight film worthy						
1-15-00	David Izon KO 9 Derrick Jefferson	HBO	h	B+	A-	B+
Don't we all feel silly now for screaming at the ref to stop it when Izon was getting hammered?						
1-15-00	**Roy Jones W 12 David Telesco**	**HBO**	**Unified lh**	**A+**	**C-**	**C**
If you'd like to see Jones against a heavyweight already, you're not alone						
1-21-00	Hicklet Lau D 10 Rocky Martinez	ESPN2	jw	C	B+	C+
Lau, ripped off against Rafael Ruelas last time out, gets stiffed again						
1-21-00	James Toney W 10 Terry McGroom	ESPN2	h	B+	C-	D
Boring, boring, boring; this was the Toney we were hoping not to see again						
1-22-00	Vernon Forrest W 12 Vince Phillips	HBO	w	A-	B+	B
Forrest finally gets high-profile fight, makes his point in one-sided win						
1-22-00	Shane Mosley KO 3 Willy Wise	HBO	jm	A	C	B-
Mosley beats Wise from pillar to post; what does this say about Julio Cesar Chavez?						
1-23-00	Julio Alvarez KO 10 Israel Cardona	Uni	l	B	C-	B-
Upset! After falling behind early, late sub stretches Cardona with bodyshot						
1-25-00	Teddy Reid KO 10 Emiliano Valdez	FOXSN	w	C-	C	F
Tragic end to brutal, dirty fight; Valdez leaves on stretcher, drifts into coma						
1-25-00	Lawrence Clay-Bey W 10 Robert Daniels	FOXSN	h	C+	C+	C
Clay-Bey survives fourth-round knockdown, wins every other second						

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime; FOXSN—Fox SportsNet; Uni—Univision; Tel—Telemundo

THE BOXING BOOKSHELF

Maybe it's just me, but after reading the autobiography of Mickey Duff, *Twenty And Out* (Collins Willow, 280 pages, £16.99 hardcover), my impression was that the impresario who has been a fixture in boxing for almost half-a-century as a matchmaker, manager, and promoter has some peculiar rules about at whom he chooses to turn up his nose. There was his father the rabbi, to whom Duff did not speak for 35 years and even declined an opportunity to repair the breach on the former's deathbed. There was Terry Lawless, the British manager who was Duff's partner until Duff brought down the ax over something that, even the way he tells it, seems more misdemeanor than felony. And there was boxer Frank Bruno, who became *persona non grata* after ending their business relationship by mail before Bruno went on to become WBC heavyweight champion.

Yet Bob Arum didn't make the cut even after, according to Duff, the American promoter availed himself of his services for a verbally agreed upon $125,000, but then didn't pay up because Duff hadn't bothered to get it on paper. When Duff cited their "gentleman's agreement," Arum's reply was, "Who says I'm a gentleman?"

But I suppose that's no more eccentric than Duff's assertion that "winning a European title meant more to me than going to bed with the best-looking bird who ever lived." In any case, his forthright reminiscences of a life begun as Monek Prager in Tarnow, Poland, and the career in boxing launched at age 12 after his family moved to England to escape the Nazis (his first name naturally evolved into "Mickey," and "Duff" was borrowed from a Jimmy Cagney movie character) are always fascinating and, thanks to writer Bob Mee, very readable and entertaining.

Inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame last year, Duff tells revealing anecdotes about the famous bashers with whom he has been associated (such as the overly thrifty Rocky Marciano), and it's great fun to revisit long-ago British worthies such as Dave Charnley and Billy Walker.

The book's title refers to Duff's official connection with 20 boxers who owned at least a slice of a world title. In actuality, though, there were only 19, because the 20th was supposed to be Brit Billy Schwer, who didn't make it against WBC lightweight champ Steve Johnston last November.

—Pete Ehrmann

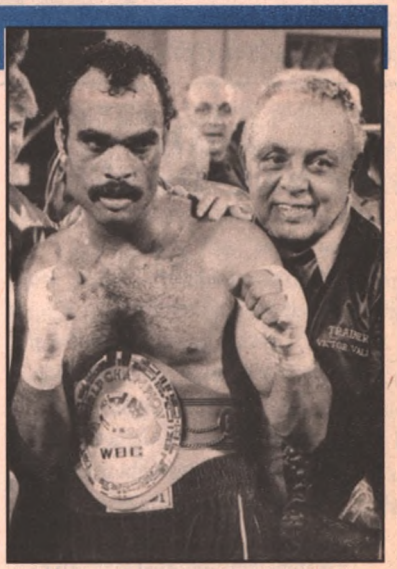
VICTOR VALLE, 1917-1999

Longtime trainer Victor Valle, 82, died of heart failure at Jacobi Hospital in the Bronx, New York, on December 24. Although best known as the trainer of former heavyweight contender Gerry Cooney and one-time WBC 140-pound champion Billy Costello, the native of Puerto Rico also worked with such championship-caliber fighters as Alfredo Escalera, Esteban DeJesus, and Jeff Lampkin. As a young man, Valle engaged in nearly 50 professional fights, two of which were decision losses to future lightweight champion Sammy Angott.

But Valle would garner much more recognition as a trainer than he ever did as a fighter. "He was as tough as a drill sergeant in the gym, but would sing his fighters to sleep in training camp," said Cooney's longtime manager, Dennis Rappaport. "In a business as treacherous as boxing, he was a noble man known for his loyalty, character, knowledge, and compassion."

Cooney, whose father had died the year before he turned pro in 1977, initially looked upon Valle as a surrogate father. Ironically, the last time he saw Valle was at his own mother's wake, just days prior to the trainer's death. "I'm just numb, in shock," said Cooney. "I had just seen him, and he looked so good. Things had changed in our relationship over the years, but I will always love him. He was so full of life, and was a very proud man."

Cooney had a well-deserved reputation as a prankster, and was not above using Valle as his foil. "When we trained at the Concord Hotel, Victor used to like to take a steam at the end of the day," recalled Cooney. "Outside the steam room was an ice pool. I used to hide in the bushes and throw him in when he walked out. The water was only about three-feet deep, but he couldn't swim so he would thrash about. I used to tell him he looked like Mark Spitz in there. After he got over being mad, we would laugh for hours."



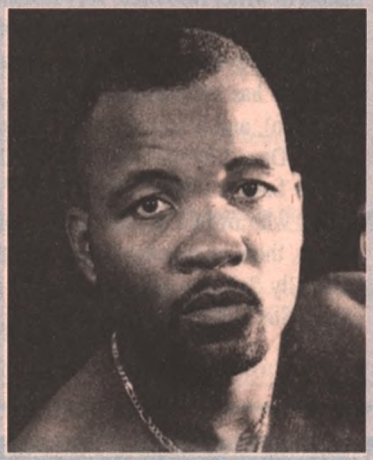
The late Valle with one of his champions, Bill Costello

Valle is survived by three children and six grandchildren.

—Robert Mladinich

OUTSIDE THE ROPES

It's not unusual to hear that a boxer is in trouble with the law, but the kind of trouble two-division former champion **Reggie Johnson** is in is atypical because it's of the white-collar variety. Johnson is spending six months under house arrest in Houston, Texas, after pleading guilty to counterfeiting cashiers checks and money orders with his home computer. Johnson helped reduce his punishment by wearing a wire to expose a co-conspirator, then further improved his situation by hiring high-priced attorney **Mike Degurin**, who got "Sweet Reggie" out of a potential 18-month prison sentence ... In the March 2000 issue of THE RING, we ran a story about the seemingly not-too-hostile split in the Main Events promotional company. Well, it has since gotten hostile. **Donna Duva Brooks** and her brother, **Dino Duva**, filed suit in December against Main Events, which is now being run by their sister-in-law, **Kathy Duva**. The suit claims Dino and Donna were illegally ousted from the company. Meanwhile, Donna has just launched the new company Duva Boxing, based in Norfolk, Virginia ... Three-division former champion **Alexis Arguello**, who, according to recent reports, has been fighting a losing battle with cocaine addiction of late, got into more trouble in early-January when he was arrested for drunk driving. The Hall of Famer was jailed for 48 hours in Managua, Nicaragua ... In early-January, U.S. District Judge **John W. Bissell** appointed New Jersey lawyer **Joseph A. Hayden Jr.** as a monitor for the IBF while several of the sanctioning body's officers are under federal indictment. Less than two weeks later, however, Hayden resigned, saying his marriage to a federal judge could be viewed as conflict of interest. Another New Jersey lawyer, **William W. Robertson**, was subsequently appointed as Hayden's replacement ... IBF lightweight champion **Paul Spadafora** signed a sponsorship deal in December with Pittsburgh Brewing Company, the makers of Iron City Beer. "The Pittsburgh Kid," who is becoming extremely popular in his hometown, will have his likeness on the product packaging by this spring ... According to a panel of German journalists, Germany's Sportsman of the Century was none other than former heavyweight champion **Max Schmeling**. Top runners-up included soccer player **Franz Beckenbauer** and tennis star **Boris Becker**.



Johnson: Gets off easy

Spadafora: Becomes a pitchman

THE PUNCHLINES

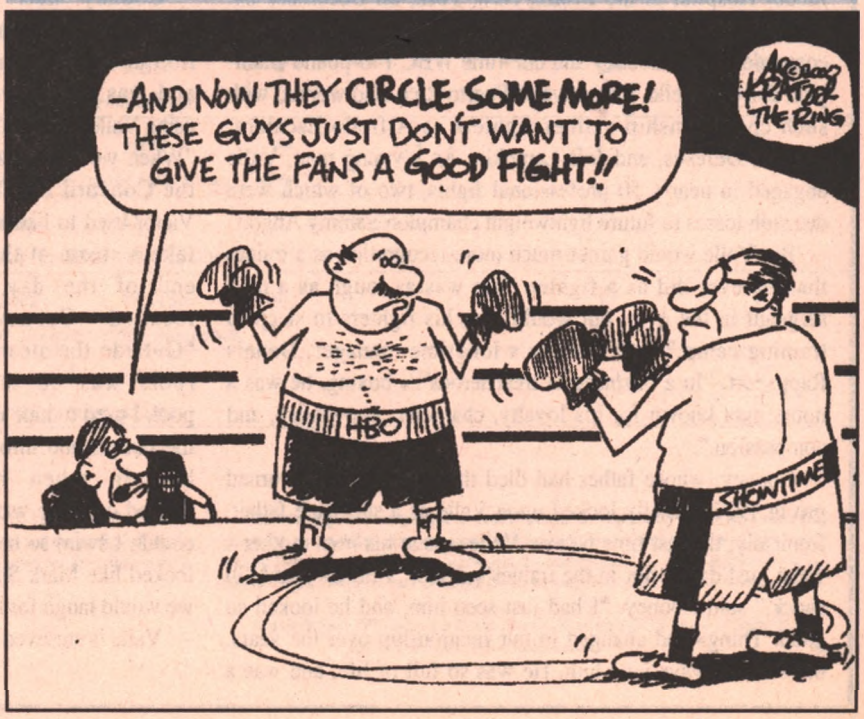
"If I ever had the chance, I'd knock out both of them."

—Cruiserweight contender James Toney, after being asked to pick a winner in the Lennox Lewis-Michael Grant heavyweight title fight

"If they can't get that fight right, how can you believe anything in the movie?"

—Former middleweight champion Joey Giardello, on the inaccurate depiction of his fight with Rubin "Hurricane" Carter in the movie *The Hurricane*

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



"THE BIBLE OF BOXING"

RATINGS ANALYSIS

(For period ended January 25, 2000)

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **ROY JONES** Light Heavyweight
2. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER** Junior Lightweight
3. **FELIX TRINIDAD** Welterweight
4. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA** Welterweight
5. **SHANE MOSLEY** Welterweight
6. **MARK JOHNSON** Junior Bantamweight
7. **RICARDO LOPEZ** Junior Flyweight
8. **ERIK MORALES** Junior Featherweight
9. **BERNARD HOPKINS** Middleweight
10. **STEVE JOHNSTON** Lightweight

HEAVYWEIGHTS: David Izon's ninth-round kayo of Derrick Jefferson (ninth last issue) knocks Jefferson out of the ratings. The result also pushes Oleg Maskaev up from 10th to ninth, and brings Izon back in at the 10th spot.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No changes.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: Even though David Telesco lost every round against Roy Jones, he retains his ninth-place rating, basically because the talent pool at 175 pounds is so shallow.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Ike Quartey, now officially a 154-pounder, debuts at number four. This bumps everybody below number four down a notch, while Tony Marshall (10th last issue) exits to make room.

WELTERWEIGHTS: Shane Mosley's third-round blowout of Willy Wise elevates him from sixth to fourth. Future Hall of Famer Pernell Whitaker stays at the fifth spot, but has not fought in almost a year, and unless he signs for a bout before the next issue, he'll be dropped altogether for inactivity. As Quartey (third last issue) is now rated among the junior middles, Vernon Forrest, Oba Carr, Jose Luis Lopez, and Shannan Taylor all move up one place each. In at 10th is veteran Wilfredo Rivera.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: Vince Phillips (seventh last issue) moved up to welterweight and was outpointed by Forrest. Therefore, Phillips is gone, and Reggie Green is installed at the 10th spot. The reshuffling also advances Mickey Ward, Arturo Gatti, and Shea Neary one notch each to seventh, eighth, and ninth, respectively. Also, Terronn Millett has been stripped of the IBF title (see "Ringside" on page 4 for details), but his number-three rating doesn't change.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: After being stopped by Julio Alvarez, Israel "Pito" Cardona (ninth last issue) departs. That allows Stefano Zoff (10th last issue) to move up to ninth and former WBC 130-pound champ Jesse James Leija to return at the 10th position.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: No changes.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: Naseem Hamed is still number one, but was stripped of the WBC belt because he insisted on keeping the WBO strap.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: Two-division former champion Danny Romero seems to have settled in as a 122-pounder, but his one-round blitz of shopworn Rodolfo Blanco wasn't enough to earn him a berth in this talent-rich division.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: Even though Gerry Penalosa lost again to WBC champion In Joo Cho, it was a very close decision, and Penalosa, therefore, retains the number-five spot he held last issue.

FLYWEIGHTS: IBF kingpin Irene Pacheco progresses from fourth to third on the strength of his impressive kayo of previously unbeaten Pedro Pena. This drops Chatchai Dutchboy Gym (third last issue) down to fourth.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: No changes.

STRAWWEIGHTS: No changes.

POUND-FOR-POUND: No changes this issue, but with Felix Trinidad and Erik Morales having dangerous bouts on tap (against David Reid and Marco Antonio Barrera, respectively), both pound-for-pounders could easily advance or be dropped, depending on the results. ■

THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended January 25, 2000

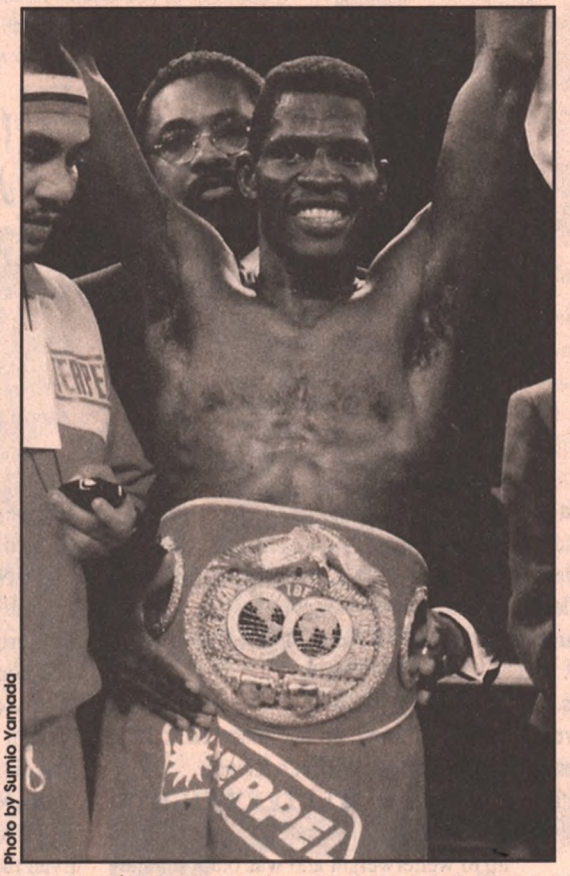


Photo by Sumio Yamada

IBF champ Irene Pacheco moved up a spot at flyweight

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

Being champion does not necessarily mean a fighter will be rated at the top of his weight class.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By The Editors

Records By Fight Fax Inc.

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

1. **LENNOX LEWIS** England 35-1-1 (WBA/WBC/IBF Champ)
2. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD** Fairburn, GA 36-4-1
3. **MICHAEL GRANT** Norristown, PA 31-0
4. **IKE IBEABUCHI** Dallas, TX 20-0
5. **DAVID TUA** Totowa, NJ 35-1
6. **MIKE TYSON** Catskill, NY 46-3
7. **VITALY KLITSCHKO** Ukraine 27-0
8. **ANDREW GOLOTA** Chicago, IL 34-4
9. **OLEG MASKAEV** Staten Island, NY 18-2
10. **DAVID IZON** Pensacola, FL 25-3

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

1. **FERNANDO VARGAS** Oxnard, CA 18-0 (IBF Champ)
2. **DAVID REID** Philadelphia, PA 14-0 (WBA Champ)
3. **LAURENT BOUDOUANI** France 38-3-1
4. **IKE QUARTEY** Ghana 34-1-1
5. **FRANCISCO CASTILLEJO** Spain 47-4 (WBC Champ)
6. **HARRY SIMON** Namibia 18-0
7. **WINKY WRIGHT** St. Petersburg, FL 39-3
8. **YORY BOY CAMPAS** Mexico 74-3
9. **KEITH MULLINGS** Brooklyn, NY 16-6-1
10. **BRONCO McKART** Monroe, MI 39-2

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

1. **NASEEM HAMED** England 33-0
2. **FRED NORWOOD** St. Louis, MO 35-0-1 (WBA Champ)
3. **PAUL INGLE** England 22-1 (IBF Champ)
4. **VUYANI BUNGU** South Africa 37-2
5. **CESAR SOTO** Mexico 53-8-2
6. **LUISITO ESPINOSA** Philippines 44-8
7. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ** Mexico 30-2
8. **JULIO PABLO CHACON** Argentina 36-0
9. **MANUEL MEDINA** Mexico 56-11
10. **MBULELO BOTILE** South Africa 26-1

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

1. **ERIK MORALES** Mexico 35-0 (WBC Champ)
2. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA** Mexico 49-2
3. **NESTOR GARZA** Mexico 37-1 (WBA Champ)
4. **LEHLO LEDWABA** South Africa 29-1-1 (IBF Champ)
5. **WAYNE McCULLOUGH** Las Vegas, NV 23-3
6. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ** Mexico 25-1-1
7. **ANTONIO CERMENO** Venezuela 34-3
8. **MANNY PACQUAIO** Philippines 26-2
9. **JUAN CARLOS RAMIREZ** Mexico 18-2
10. **MICHAEL BRODIE** England 27-0

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

1. **TIM AUSTIN** Cincinnati, OH 20-0-1 (IBF Champ)
2. **PAULIE AYALA** Ft. Worth, TX 29-1 (WBA Champ)
3. **JOHNNY TAPIA** Albuquerque, NM 47-1-2
4. **VEERAPOL SAHAPROM** Thailand 23-1 (WBC Champ)
5. **NANA KONADU** Ghana 40-4-1
6. **JORGE ELIECER JULIO** Colombia 42-2
7. **JULIO GAMBOA** Nicaragua 24-4
8. **ADAN VARGAS** Mexico 33-1-1
9. **CUAUHTEMOC GOMEZ** Mexico 46-7
10. **JOHNNY BREDAHL** Denmark 45-1

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

1. **JUAN CARLOS GOMEZ**
   Germany 29-0 (WBC Champ)
2. **FABRICE TIOZZO**
   France 41-1 (WBA Champ)
3. **VASSILIY JIROV**
   Kazakhstan 22-0 (IBF Champ)
4. **JOHNNY NELSON**
   England 36-12-1
5. **MARCELO DOMINGUEZ**
   Argentina 29-3-1
6. **ARTHUR WILLIAMS**
   Pensacola, FL 32-5-1
7. **JAMES TONEY**
   Las Vegas, NV 59-4-2
8. **CARL THOMPSON**
   England 25-5
9. **SAUL MONTANA**
   Mexico 33-6
10. **DALE BROWN**
    Canada 18-1-1

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 175 pounds

1. **ROY JONES**
   Pensacola, FL 41-1 (WBC/WBA/IBF Champ)
2. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI**
   Germany 41-0
3. **LOU DEL VALLE**
   Bronx, NY 28-2
4. **REGGIE JOHNSON**
   Houston, TX 40-6-1
5. **GRACIANO ROCCHIGIANI**
   Germany 40-4-1
6. **MICHAEL NUNN**
   Davenport, IA 54-4
7. **ERIC HARDING**
   Philadephia, PA 18-0-1
8. **ANTONIO TARVER**
   Orlando, FL 14-0
9. **DAVID TELESCO**
   Port Chester, NY 23-3
10. **MONTELL GRIFFIN**
    Chicago, IL 38-3

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

1. **SVEN OTTKE**
   Germany 17-0 (IBF Champ)
2. **JOE CALZAGHE**
   Wales 27-0
3. **BYRON MITCHELL**
   Ozark, AL 20-0-1 (WBA Champ)
4. **MARKUS BEYER**
   Germany 17-0 (WBC Champ)
5. **CHARLES BREWER**
   Philadelphia, PA 34-6
6. **THOMAS TATE**
   Houston, TX 36-6
7. **FRANKIE LILES**
   N. Hollywood, CA 32-3
8. **RICHIE WOODHALL**
   England 25-2
9. **ROBIN REID**
   England 26-2-1
10. **GLENN CATLEY**
    England 25-3

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
   Philadelphia, PA 36-2-1 (IBF Champ)
2. **WILLIAM JOPPY**
   Washington, D.C. 28-1-1 (WBA Champ)
3. **KEITH HOLMES**
   Washington, D.C. 34-2 (WBC Champ)
4. **HASSINE CHERIFI**
   France 28-3-1
5. **ANTWUN ECHOLS**
   Davenport, IA 22-3-1
6. **OTIS GRANT**
   Canada 31-2-1
7. **ROBERT McCRACKEN**
   England 33-0
8. **ARMAND KRAJNC**
   Sweden 22-0
9. **DAVEY HILTON**
   Canada 37-1-3
10. **BERT SCHENK**
    Germany 23-0

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

1. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Puerto Rico 36-0 (IBF/WBC Champ)
2. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Whittier, CA 31-1
3. **JAMES PAGE**
   Pittsburg, CA 25-3 (WBA Champ)
4. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Pomona, CA 34-0
5. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Norfolk, VA 41-3-1
6. **VERNON FORREST**
   Atlanta, GA 31-0
7. **OBA CARR**
   Detroit, MI 49-3-1
8. **JOSE LUIS LOPEZ**
   Mexico 42-4-2
9. **SHANNAN TAYLOR**
   Australia 25-0-1
10. **WILFREDO RIVERA**
    Puerto Rico 30-4-1

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

1. **SHARMBA MITCHELL**
   Washington, D.C. 46-2 (WBA Champ)
2. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Australia 23-1-1 (WBC Champ)
3. **TERRONN MILLETT**
   St. Louis, MO 22-1-1
4. **ZAB JUDAH**
   Brooklyn, NY 21-0
5. **RANDALL BAILEY**
   Miami, FL 20-0
6. **ANTONIO DIAZ**
   Coachella, CA 29-2
7. **MICKEY WARD**
   Lowell, MA 34-9
8. **ARTURO GATTI**
   Jersey City, NJ 30-4
9. **SHEA NEARY**
   England 22-0
10. **REGGIE GREEN**
    Clinton, MD 30-4

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

1. **STEVE JOHNSTON**
   Denver, CO 29-1 (WBC Champ)
2. **ANGEL MANFREDY**
   Gary, IN 28-4-1
3. **PAUL SPADAFORA**
   Pittsburgh, PA 28-0 (IBF Champ)
4. **CESAR BAZAN**
   Mexico 36-3-1
5. **IVAN ROBINSON**
   Philadelphia, PA 29-3
6. **GILBERT SERRANO**
   Venezuela 18-4-2 (WBA Champ)
7. **COLIN DUNNE**
   England 29-1
8. **ARTUR GRIGORIJAN**
   Uzbekistan 28-0
9. **STEFANO ZOFF**
   Italy 28-7-2
10. **JAMES LEIJA**
    San Antonio, TX 39-4-2

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

1. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER**
   Grand Rapids, MI 22-0 (WBC Champ)
2. **DIEGO CORRALES**
   Sacramento, CA 30-0 (IBF Champ)
3. **JONGKWON BAEK**
   South Korea 21-0 (WBA Champ)
4. **ROBERTO GARCIA**
   Oxnard, CA 32-1
5. **LAKVA SIM**
   Mongolia 11-2-1
6. **YONG SOO CHOI**
   South Korea 26-3-1
7. **JESUS CHAVEZ**
   Austin, TX 29-1
8. **ACELINO FREITAS**
   Brazil 24-0
9. **DERRICK GAINER**
   Pensacola, FL 33-4
10. **GOYO VARGAS**
    Mexico 39-6-1

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

1. **MARK JOHNSON**
   Washington, D.C. 38-1 (IBF Champ)
2. **IN JOO CHO**
   South Korea 17-0 (WBC Champ)
3. **HIDEKI TODAKA**
   Japan 16-2-1 (WBA Champ)
4. **JESUS ROJAS**
   Venezuela 33-7-3
5. **GERRY PENALOSA**
   Philippines 40-3-2
6. **YOKTHAI SITHOAR**
   Thailand 18-1-1
7. **LUIS BOLANO**
   Colombia 31-0
8. **RATANACHAI VORAPIN**
   Thailand 35-4
9. **JOEL LUNA-ZARATE**
   Mexico 32-3-2
10. **ERIC MOREL**
    Madison, WI 23-0

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

1. **SORNPICHAI KRATCHINGDAENG**
   Thailand 17-0 (WBA Champ)
2. **MEDGOEN 3K-BATTERY**
   Thailand 19-0 (WBC Champ)
3. **IRENE PACHECO**
   Colombia 24-0 (IBF Champ)
4. **CHATCHAI DUTCHBOY GYM**
   Thailand 34-2
5. **LEO GAMEZ**
   Venezuela 32-7-1
6. **HUGO SOTO**
   Argentina 50-6-2
7. **JOSE BONILLA**
   Venezuela 25-5
8. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT**
   Thailand 33-1
9. **ALEJANDRO MONTIEL**
   Mexico 41-3
10. **ISIDRO GARCIA**
    Los Angeles, CA 20-1-1

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

1. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
   Mexico 48-0-1 (IBF Champ)
2. **YEOSAM CHOI**
   South Korea 21-1 (WBC Champ)
3. **ROSENDO ALVAREZ**
   Nicaragua 26-1-1
4. **PICHITNOI C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand 21-1 (WBA Champ)
5. **SAMAN SORJATURONG**
   Thailand 40-3-1
6. **BABY JAKE MATLALA**
   South Africa 50-10-2
7. **MELCHOR COB CASTRO**
   Mexico 58-6-4
8. **WILL GRIGSBY**
   St. Paul, MN 14-2-1
9. **JOMA GAMBOA**
   Philippines 26-4-1
10. **MICHAEL CARBAJAL**
    Phoenix, AZ 49-4

STRAWWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

1. **ZOLANI PETELO**
   South Africa 15-2-2 (IBF Champ)
2. **WANDEE CHOR CHAREON**
   Thailand 23-3 (WBC Champ)
3. **CHANA PORPAOIN**
   Thailand 39-1-1
4. **NOEL ARAMBULET**
   Venezuela 11-1-1(WBA Champ)
5. **SONGKRAM PORPAOIN**
   Thailand 20-2-1
6. **JOSE GARCIA**
   Colombia 22-4-1
7. **ROCKY LIN**
   Philippines 26-2
8. **JOSE AGUIRRE**
   Mexico 21-1-1
9. **KERMIN GUARDIA**
   Columbia 32-2
10. **OSWALDO GUERRERO**
    Mexico 27-5

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April 1983: Randall "Tex" Cobb: Not Just Another Pretty Face. Plus: Hector Camacho, Carlos Monzon, Bob Foster, Charley Burley, Scypion-Fletcher, Mayweather-Serrano, Stanley Ketchel.

May 1983: Michael Spinks Wins It All. Plus: Spinks-Braxton color, Bob Arum, Marvin Hagler, Collins-LaPaglia.

June 1983: What Now For Ray Mancini? Plus: Lupe Pintor, Paddy Flood, Bonecrusher Smith, Charlie Brown, Frazier-Broad, Chang-Zapata, Holmes-Teofilo Stevenson, Tony Ayala, Jersey Joe Walcott.

Aug. 1983: Roberto Duran: One "Mas" Time. Plus: Larry Holmes, Colin Jones, Jimmy Montoya, Alexis Arguello, Billy Petrolle, Duran-Moore, Frazier-Bugner, Resto-Collins, Escalera-Hatcher.

Sept. 1983: Exclusive: Sugar Ray Leonard Talks About His Past, Present, And Future. Plus: Hagler-Duran, Jaime Garza, Panama Lewis, Spinks-Muhammad, Bobo Olson, Mustafa Hamsho, Muniz-Chandler, Hearns-Sutherland.

Nov. 1983: Gerrie Coetzee: The New Heavyweight Champ Sets His Sights On Holmes. Plus: Alexis Arguello, Murray Sutherland, James J. Braddock, Muhammad Ali.

Feb. 1984: Don King Talks And Talks And Talks. Plus: Leonard's return, Eddie Mustafa Muhammad, 1983 quotes, Marvin Hagler, Johnny Bratton, Gerald Hayes, Hagler-Duran color.

June 1984: Bumphus, Lockridge, Duva: 'That Championship Year.' Plus: Ferdie Pacheco, Harry Arroyo, Holmes-Coetzee preview, Pipino Cuevas, Aaron Pryor, Battling Nelson-Joe Gans, Witherspoon-Page.

July 1984: Bazooka's Aim Is True: Gomez Shoots Down LaPorte In The Battle For San Juan. Plus: Michael Spinks, Vinny Pazienza, Tyrone Crawley, Leonard's comeback, Chandler-Sandoval, Hagler-Roldan.

Aug. 1984: Olympic Special: Mark Breland Leads A Strong Squad. Plus: Leonard-Howard, Davila-Sanchez, Bonecrusher-Bruno, Bramble-Mancini, Hatcher-Bumphus, Garza-Orozco.

Oct. 1984: The Beast From The East: John Mugabi Strikes Terror Into The Hearts Of Men. Plus: Olympics, Bill Costello, Davey Moore, Wilfred Benitez, King's heavyweights.

Jan. 1985: Holmes-Bonecrusher Color Action. Plus: Gerry Cooney, pro debuts (Breland, Hill, Taylor, Biggs, Whitaker, Holyfield), Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza.

Feb. 1985: Showdown: Page Clobbers Coetzee For WBA Title. Plus: Larry Holmes, lightweights, Cooney-Chaplin, McCallum-Minchillo.

April 1985: Special Hagler-Hearns Program. Plus: British fighters, Hector Camacho, Donald Curry, Sonny Liston.

May 1985: The Rematch In Reno: Bramble-Mancini Color Action. Plus: Donald Curry, Aaron Pryor, McGuigan-LaPorte.

June 1985: Holmes' Last Hurrah? Holmes-Bey Color Action. Plus: Holmes vs. all-time greats, Paul-Arroyo, 1901.

Aug. 1985: Seven Elected To The Ring Hall Of Fame (Jose Napoles, Jake LaMotta, Panama Al Brown, Manuel Ortiz, Young Stribling, Thomas Jackling, Lord Lonsdale). Plus: Spinks-Holmes preview, Barry McGuigan.

Sept. 1985: Barry McGuigan: Can He Be Boxing's Savior? Plus: Truth Williams, Tyrell Biggs, Greg Richardson, Julio Cesar Chavez, Paul-Blake, Witherspoon-Bonecrusher, Berbick-Bey, Pinklon Thomas.

Oct. 1985: The "Macho Man" Rides Again. Plus: Jeff Fenech, Berbick-Green, John E. Garcia, Dwight Muhammad Qawi, McCallum-Braxton.

Nov. 1985: Will Hagler Feast On The Beast? Plus: Hagler-Mugabi & Hearns-Shuler previews, Lonnie Smith, Pintor-Meza, Chuck Hull, Benitez-Moley.

Dec. 1985: Michael Spinks: Against All Odds. Plus: Curry-McCrory preview, McGuigan-Taylor, Alexis Arguello, Michael Olajide, Chavez-Pratchett.

Jan. 1986: In Search Of A Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Azumah Nelson, Arguello-Jefferson, Olympic update, Chicago boxing.

March 1986 (Awards Issue): Co-Fighters Of The Year: Marvelous Marvin Hagler & Donald Curry. Plus: Ring's Annual Awards, Evander Holyfield, Williamson-Muhammad, Camacho-Roach, 1985 boxing diary.

April 1986: Witherspoon Tames Tubbs For WBA Title. Plus: Dream fights, Greg Haugen, Tyrell Biggs, Mark Breland, Paul Gonzales, HBO tourney, Witherspoon-Tubbs, Frank Warren, Gene Tunney.

May 1986: Marvelous Marvin Tames The Beast. Plus: Hearns-Shuler, Mike Tyson, Bramble-Crawley, Sandoval-Canizales, Marvin Johnson, McGuigan-Cabrera, Arguello-Costello, Weaver-Williams.

June 1986: Barry's Back In The USA: McGuigan Breathes A Breath Of Fresh Air Into American Fight Scene. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Robbie Sims, Qawi-Holyfield preview, Berbick-Thomas, Bruno-Coetzee.

July 1986: Spinks-Holmes II: Who Really Won? Plus: Frank Bruno, Richie Sandoval, Kevin Watts, Tyson-Tillis, Boza-Edwards-Alli, Johnson-Burns.

Aug. 1986: Is Sugar Ray Still Sweet? Plus: Lloyd Honeyghan, Tyson-Green, Cooney-Gregg, Hall of Fame (Eder Jofre, Benny Lynch, Bud Taylor, Sam McVey, Nat Langham, John Chambers), Bernardo Pinango.

Sept. 1986: Gerry Cooney vs. Mike Tyson: Who Would Win? Plus: Cruz-McGuigan, Hearns-Medal, Tyson-Gross, Sims-Duran.

Dec. 1986: The Weekend That Shook The Boxing World. Rosario-Bramble & Honeyghan-Curry. Plus: Butch Lewis interview, Buster Drayton, Hector Camacho, Jake LaMotta.

April 1987: Hagler-Leonard Souvenir Issue. Plus: Czyz, Orlando Canizales, Mugabi-Thomas, Biggs-Snipes, Chavez-LaPorte, Bonecrusher-Witherspoon II, Haugen-Paul.

May 1987: Mike Tyson: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, *The Ring* annual ratings, Louie Espinoza, Herol Graham.

June 1987: Vinny Paz: Phenom Or Phony? Plus: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Mark Breland, Brian Mitchell, Holyfield, Czyz-Edwards, Olajide-Lee, Curry-Montgomery.

July 1987: Spinks-Cooney: The Fight That Refused To Die. Plus: The new *Ring* ratings, Terry Marsh, George Foreman's return, Khaosai Galaxy, Hearns-Andries, Whitaker-Mayweather.

Aug. 1987: Sugar Ray: Still In Style. Plus: Leonard-Hagler, all-time heavyweight ratings, Czyz-MacDonald, Camacho-Davis.

Sept. 1987: Michael Olajide: The Look Of The Future? Plus: Tyson-Thomas, Jeff Fenech, middleweight muddle, Tsuyoshi Hamada, Juan Roldan, Harold Knight.

Nov. 1987: Tyson Wins Heavyweight Triple Crown. Plus: McCallum-Curry, Carlos Monzon interview, triple champions, Orlin & Terry Norris, Ramirez-Alli, Fenech-Richardson, Matthew Hilton.

Dec. 1987: Spinks & Lewis: Boxing's Beastie Boys. Plus: Starling-Breland, Ramzi Hassan, Honeyghan-Hatcher, Holyfield-Ocasio.

Jan. 1988: Darrin Van Horn-Million Dollar Baby? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Hill-Stewart, Juan Coggi, great hookers, AIDS.

Feb. 1988: Gold Outshines Glitter: Tate Tops Olajide. Plus: Tyson-Biggs, Kalambay-Barkley, Hearns-Roldan, fights we'd like to see.

April 1988: Evander Holyfield: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Special year-end awards, Holyfield-Qawi II, Foreman-Sekorski, Hill-Angulo.

May 1988: George Foreman: "I Can Beat Tyson." Plus: Tyson-Holmes, Jesse Benavides, Showtime, no-knockout artists.

Aug. 1988: Julio Cesar Chavez: The Kid From Culiacan. Plus: Holyfield, bad decisions, Lockridge-Knight, Starling-Breland II, Brown-Trice, Haugen-Santana.

Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again! Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde.

Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.

Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray Is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Molinares-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.

Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-McGirt, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Louie Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Morales, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 68. Plus: Carlos Monzon, Mike Tyson, Leonard-Duran, Daniel Zaragoza, Nunn-Barkley, Whitaker-Ramirez, George Foreman (color).

Feb. 1990: Mike Tyson: Riddick Bowe & Ray Mercer Take Aim. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Chuck Wepner, Antonio Esparragoza, Roman-Laciar.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker: Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Tiger Flowers, Duran-Leonard, Chavez-Taylor preview, Jorge Paez, Ali-Cooper.

May 1990: Big George Talks Tough: "Tyson Won't Be That Difficult!" Plus: Ed Hopson, Russian fighters, grudge wars, Archie Moore, Kid Berg, Marcel Cerdan, Chavez-Cortes.

June 1990: Buster! How James Douglas Shocked The World. Plus: Michael Moorer, Camacho-Paez, Tommy Farr, Excuses, Dick Tiger, Ruben Olivares-Jeff Chandler.

July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before," By Evander Holyfield. Plus: James Toney, Buddy McGirt, Glenwood Brown, Aaron Davis, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan, Mark Breland, Ali-Liston II (color).

Aug. 1990: Chavez: His Greatness Confirmed ... Is He The Best Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, John L. Sullivan & Mike Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Cus D'Amato, Louis-Godoy (color).

Sept. 1990: Marvin Hagler-Can He Resist The Irresistible Temptation? Plus: Thomas Hearns, Sanchez-Saddler, Paul Banke, puncher vs. chin, Beau Jack, Robinson-LaMotta (color).

Oct. 1990: Rocky Graziano—Thanks For The Memories. Plus: Aaron Pryor, Junior Jones, Mike Tyson, Chris Eubank, Wolgast-Nelson, Hall of Fame.

Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman. Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Bruce Seldon, best chins, Sullivan-Kilrain (color), Azumah Nelson, LaStarza.

Dec. 1990: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Douglas-Holyfield preview, Julio Cesar Chavez, Joe Grim, Whitaker-Nazario, Rosi-Van Horn, Benny Leonard, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV—Now You'll Pay! Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison in *Rocky V*, Reggie Tuur, Chiquita Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis.

March 1991: Hunger! It Made Evander A Champ, But ... Plus: Dempsey-Firpo, Charles Murray, Khaosai Galaxy, Nunn-Curry, Henry Armstrong, Sonny Liston (color).

April 1991: Julio Cesar Chavez—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Tyson-Stewart, James Leija, Wilfred Benitez, Pedro Decima, Moore-Bassey.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Foreman-Holyfield preview, Norris-Leonard, David Kamau, Freddie Steele, Bennie Briscoe, Leonard's career (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't What He Used To Be...But It's Not Gonna Matter. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie Meehan, Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welterweight tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heavyweight finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight ... And The World A Thrill (color). Plus: Making weight, Harry Greb, Kevin Kelley, Louis-Conn I, Simon Brown-Blocker, Chavez-Duplessis, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again-How Far Can Thomas Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Carr, Dave McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, Luther McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light heavy tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano (color).

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Who Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack Britton, Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, rating the 44 world champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, Ezzard Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

May 1992: James Toney—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Myung Woo Yuh, Khaosai Galaxy, Rocky Graziano, Billy Soose, Roy Jones, James Warring, Duran-Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

June 1992: What Now? Boxing Without Mike Tyson. Plus: Buck Smith, Liston-Foreman, Billy Graham, Holmes-Mercer, Enrique Pinder, Hilario Zapata, Toney-Tiberi, Benny Lynch, Tony DeMarco, Tyson centerfold (color).

July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title Shot? Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Kelley-Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Holmes-Ali (color).

Aug. 1992: Holyfield-Holmes Prefight. Holmes: "I See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: Iran Barkley, Herbie Hide, George Foreman, Tex Cobb, Carnival of Champions, Harry Greb, Haugen-Mancini, Oscar De La Hoya, Gene Tunney (color).

Sept. 1992: Chavez: Unbeaten At 80-0, But What If He Had To Face These Guys? Plus: Bobby Czyz, Genaro Hernandez, Norris-Taylor, Tommy Gibbons, Sugar Ray Leonard's career, Sugar Ray Robinson (color).

Oct. 1992: The Supreme Dream: The Heavyweight Hopes Of The Heavyweight Hopefuls. Plus: Kevin Kelley, All-Time Top 10: South Africa, Meldrick Taylor, Sharmba Mitchell, Bob Foster, Eder Jofre, Max Baer (color).

Nov. 1992: Is Riddick Bowe The Next Heavyweight Champion? Plus: Morrison-Hipp, Canizales-Chandler, Chavez-Camacho preview, Australia Best of Nation, Tyson speaks from prison, Corbett-Sullivan (color), Tracy Patterson, Pat Barrett, Knockout Brown.

Feb. 1993: America's Tribute To The Brown Bomber: Joe Louis. Plus: Virgil Hill, Junior Jones, Roger Mayweather, Chicago boxing, Orlando Zulueta, Jose Napoles (color).

March 1993: From Question Man To Answer Man: Riddick Bowe Leaves No Doubts. Plus: Lennox Lewis, Lopez-Gamache, Frank Bruno, Rocky Kansas, Frank Fletcher, Crisanto Espana, Bowe-Lewis (color).

April 1993: Riddick Bowe: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: "Grand Slam" fight card, Toney-Barkley preview, Morris East, Joe Louis-John Henry Lewis, All-Time Top 10: Argentina, Fighters of the Year (color).

May 1993: Oscar De La Hoya's Sprint To The Title: Is He Good Enough *Now?* Plus: Carbajal-Gonzalez preview, Lennox Lewis, THE RING Poll, Freddie Pendleton.

Aug. 1993: A Ring Exclusive: Julio Cesar Chavez Speaks Out. Plus: Bobby•Czyz, 10 hardest punchers, Rafael Ruelas, Carmen Basilio, closing of the Fifth Street Gym, Sugar Ray Leonard (color).

Oct. 1993: Tommy Morrison: Good Enough To Beat Big George, But Will He Win The Heavyweight Title? Plus: Riddick Bowe, Mike Capriano, Billy Conn-Joe Louis, All-Time Top 10: Puerto Rico, Charles Murray.

April 1994: Michael Carbajal: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Brown-Norris, Kevin Kelley, Ceferino Garcia, Oscar De La Hoya, Tunney Hunsaker, Spinks-Foster.

Aug. 1994: Bowe's Back! Determined To Do It Again. Plus: Eric Griffin, Pernell Whitaker, Ray Mercer, Roger Donoghue, State of the Game (midterm report), All-Time Top 10: The Philippines.

Oct. 1994: Rating The Champs: Whitaker & Toney Lead The Field ... But Roy Jones Is Closing Fast. Plus: Oscar De La Hoya, Meldrick Taylor, Rafael Ruelas, Curtis Cokes.

Nov. 1994: With Lewis Fighting Bowe ... Is Michael Moorer's Career Off-Target? Plus: Wayne McCullough, Hall of Fame, Alejandro Lavorante, Rocky Marciano, Paz-Duran, Injuries (part I), What If ... Pedroza vs. Sanchez.

Dec. 1994: Fighting-Mad! James Toney Just Wants To Beat People Up. Plus: Duran & Robinson, Don King, Mike McCallum, Injuries (part II), Tom Molineaux.

Jan. 1995: A Puncher's Dream: Oliver McCall Upsets Boxing's Balance Of Power. Plus: Ruelas brothers, Quincy Taylor, "Unfinished Business," Dave Maier, All-Time Top 10: Canada.

May 1995: The State Of The Game. Plus: Olzubek & Arbachakov, Gonzalez-Kelley, Pazienza-Duran II, All-Time Top 10: France.

June 1995: (92-Page Special): Foreman Frowns Upon The Age Gap: "I Don't Think Tyson Should Fight Anyone But Me." Plus: Least deserving heavyweight challengers, Carlos Monzon, Kostya Tszyu.

July 1995: Pernell Whitaker: *The Ring* Makes "Pound-For-Pound" An Official Title. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Ike Quartey, Benn-McClellan, TV prospects, Hector Acero-Sanchez, Harry Matthews, What If ... Robinson-Burley.

Oct. 1995: (92-Page Special): Mismatch? Don't Tell Peter McNeeley! Plus: Fights we'd like to see, Jo-el Scott, Bronco McKart, when stop fights?

Dec. 1995: McNeeley Goes Too Soon—Mike Tyson: The Beast Is Yet To Come. Plus: Tommy Morrison, Naseem Hamed, Chiquita Gonzalez, Gaspar Ortega, best chins.

Winter 1995 (92-Page Special): Buster Mathis Jr.: "Mike Tyson, You Got A Fight Comin' On." Plus: Holyfield-Bowe III preview, Wayne McCullough, Jesse James Hughes, Norris-Vaden preview, *The Ring* Insiders' Poll, What If ... Moore-Ayala Jr.

Feb. 1996: Bowe's The Man (For Now), But Is He Man Enough For Tyson? Also: Lennox Lewis, Hamed-Barrera, Paul Banke, Vince Phillips, boxing on Madison Ave., What If ... Leonard-Pryor.

May 1996: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Frankie Randall, Tim Witherspoon, Roy Jones, Bernard Hopkins.

Aug. 1996: A Closer Look At Tyson. Where He's At ... And Where He's Going. Plus: Joe Frazier, Roberto Duran, Buster Douglas, Arturo Gatti, women's boxing.

Sept. 1996: Lennox Lewis: Tough Enough For Tyson? Plus: Lewis-Mercer, Olympic team, Pernell Whitaker, Mark Johnson, Rocky, Scrapiron Johnson, heavyweight hopefuls.

Nov. 1996: Pole-Axed! Low Blows, Sinking Bowe, Ugly Show. Plus: Bowe-Golota I, Blinky Palermo, exciting fighters, Winky Wright, Joe Brown.

Dec. 1996: Our Spin On Roy Jones. Plus: heavyweight division, Olympic recap, Luis Rodriguez, Puerto Rican fighters, Danny Hodge, Saad Muhammad.

March 1997 (92-Page Special): Mike Tyson. Can He Reclaim His Greatness? Plus: 10 greatest controversies, Teddy Atlas & Michael Moorer, Kostya Tszyu, George Chuvalo.

May 1997: De La Hoya-Whitaker: Can "Sweet Pea" Stop Oscar's March To Greatness? Plus: Fitzsimmons-Corbett, Junior Jones, Phillip Holiday, Don King, Zaragoza-McCullough.

June 1997 (Special Collector's Issue): Holyfield-Tyson II: What It Means For Now ... And Forever. Plus: Holyfield-Tyson fight poster, Naseem Hamed, computer unification, Sayers-Heenan, state of the game.

July 1997: Leonard: There Wasn't Even A Ray Of Hope. Plus: Felix Trinidad, David Reid, Willie deWit & Shawn O'Sullivan, THE RING's 75th anniversary, Moore-Durelle I.

Oct. 1997: Bang! Naseem Hamed Takes Aim At America. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Phillips-Tszyu, Saman Sorjaturong, Bobby Dykes.

Holiday 1997: Roy Jones: When He's Motivated, He's Unstoppable—Got That, Evander? Plus: Julio Cesar Green, Sugar Shane Mosley, boxers' day jobs, Tyson's mentor, Kid Lavigne.

Jan. 1998: Give This Man His Due! If You Can't Respect Oscar ... You Can't Respect Anyone! Plus: Sanchez-Mayweather, Morales-Zaragoza, Lucia Rijker, Marvin Johnson, characters.

Feb. 1998: Welter-Skelter! The Hottest Division In Boxing. Plus: Lewis-Golota, Olympic update, Art Shires, boxing I.Q.

March 1998 (92-Page Special): Into The Millennium With The Real Deal: THE RING's Timeline For Evander Holyfield. Plus: Hernandez-Hernandez, Briggs-Foreman, 10 champs recall "The Day I Won The Title," Johnny Thompson.

April 1998: Evander Holyfield: THE RING's Fighter Of The Year (Again!). Plus: Yory Boy Campas, Mullings-Norris, Pinkey Mitchell, Holyfield Q & A, Hamed-Kelley, Oscar De La Hoya.

May 1998: Wrestling With His Reinstatement: Is Tyson Biting The Hand That Feeds Him? Plus: Lewis-Briggs preview, Michael Grant, Manfredy-Gatti, Ski Goldstein, Dan Donnelly.

June 1998 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Tyson-King, David Reid, Bernard Hopkins, Ken Norton.

July 1998: Holyfield ... Tapia ... Hamed ... Jones ... Trinidad ... De La Hoya: Who Will Be The First To Fall? Plus: Magic Johnson, Chavez-Gonzalez & Lopez-Alvarez, underappreciated boxers.

Aug. 1998: Lennox Lewis: No Holyfield, No Glory. Plus: Felix Trinidad, Pat & Mike McMurtry, Chris Byrd, unbreakable records, contenders & pretenders.

Sept. 1998 (92-Page Special): This Man's Not Unbeatable! Five Top Trainers Reveal How To Solve The Hamed Puzzle. Plus: John Tate, Freddie Norwood, Andrew Golota, Roy Jones, 12 greatest finishes.

Oct. 1998: Really Hard Punch ... Really Soft Lips: Oscar Makes Legs Quiver In And Out Of The Ring. Plus: Hector Camacho Jr., Mayweather-Hernandez preview, *Tuesday Night Fights.*

Nov. 1998: Oscar De La Hoya vs. The All-Time Greats. Plus: David Reid, Fernando Vargas, Cory Spinks, LeRoy Neiman, Don King, Hall of Fame.

Holiday 1998 (92-Page Special): A War Worthy Of An Encore: Why Gatti & Robinson Have To Do It Again! Plus: Kostya Tszyu, Israel Cardona, Mills Lane, 50 greatest heavyweights.

Jan. 1999: Sugar Shane Mosley: The Sweet Tradition Continues. Plus: Evander Holyfield, Julio Cesar Chavez, Erik Morales, Ray "Windmill" White.

Feb. 1999: 1999! It's Gonna Be A Great Year For Boxing. Plus: Mike Tyson, Foreman-Holmes, David Reid, Eric Morel, Richie Mitchell, quitters.

March 1999: De La Hoya vs. Quartey: Does Bazooka Have The Weapons To Shoot Down Oscar? Plus: Sugar Shane Mosley, Lopez-Alvarez II, Roy Jones, Coley Wallace.

April 1999 (92-Page Special): Fighter Of The Year: Floyd Mayweather Jr.: "He's So Good, It's Scary!" Plus: Fernando Vargas, James Page, Luisito Espinosa, Robinson-Gatti II, Archie Moore, Carlos Oritz, 1998 diary.

May 1999: Is It All Over For Tyson? Plus: Terry Norris, Vinny Pazienza, Jesus Pimental, stoppages, mandatories.

June 1999: The Fans Have Spoken: Results Of *The Ring* Readers' Poll. Plus: Michael Grant, De La Hoya-Quartey, Antwun Echols, Ted Lowry.

July 1999 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Holyfield-Lewis, Felix Trinidad, Stevie Johnston, Emile Griffith, Phil Zwick.

August 1999: Candidates For Greatness: Can Anyone Fill The Heavyweight Void? Plus: Tim Austin, Naseem Hamed, Oscar De La Hoya, Max Scmheling, Holyfield-Lewis.

September 1999: Taking Stock In The Fight Game: Who's Hot, Who's Not. Plus: Tony Ayala, Keith Holmes, Denny & Phil Moyer, scoring.

October 1999 (92-Page Special): Felix & Oscar Go To War! Who's Going To Prevail In The Welter Shootout? Plus: Floyd Mayweather, Harry Simon, Omar Sheika, Al Andrews, 20 greatest fighters of 20th century.

November 1999: Three Belts Aren't Enough! What The Fans Demand Of Roy Jones! Plus: Davey Hilton, Maurice Harris, Byron Mitchell, Ayala-Tapia, '99 Hall of Fame.

December 1999: Insiders' Analysis: Can Roy Jones Chop Down The Best Heavyweights? Plus: Ike Ibeabuchi, David Reid, David Tua, Carmen Basilio, Johnny Summerlin.

Holiday 1999 (92-Page Special): Heavyweight Showdowns! Holyfield vs. Lewis II, Grant vs. Golota. Plus: Francois Botha, Arturo Gatti, Michael Carbajal, Rocky Marciano, Lou Filippo.

January 2000: What Does Trinidad's Victory Over Oscar Mean? Plus: Floyd Mayweather, Paul Spadafora, Ralph Dupas, boxing media.

February 2000: Who Is Roy Jones? A Revealing Look At Boxing's Pound-For-Pound Best. Plus: Tyson-Norris, Matty McCue, tactical blunders, best fights of the '90s.

March 2000: Lennox Lewis: The Champ For The Millennium ... Or Just For The Moment? Plus: Oleg Maskaev, Main Events, Derrick Jefferson, Jerry Buss, IBF scandal.

April 2000 (92-Page Special): Paulie Ayala—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Evander Holyfield, Grant-Golota, Stephan Johnson, Gaspar Ortega, Kitten Hayward, writers' favorite fights.

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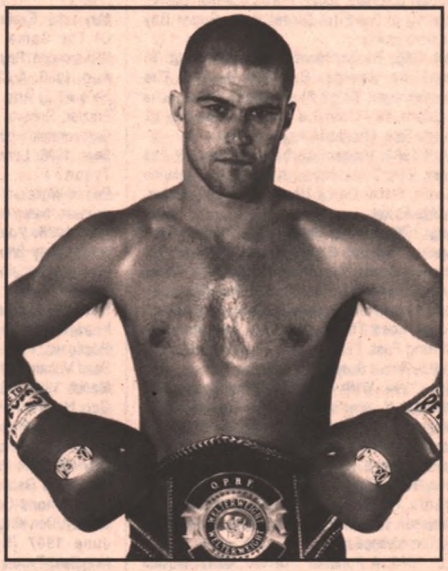
NEW FACES

SHANNAN TAYLOR

Welterweight

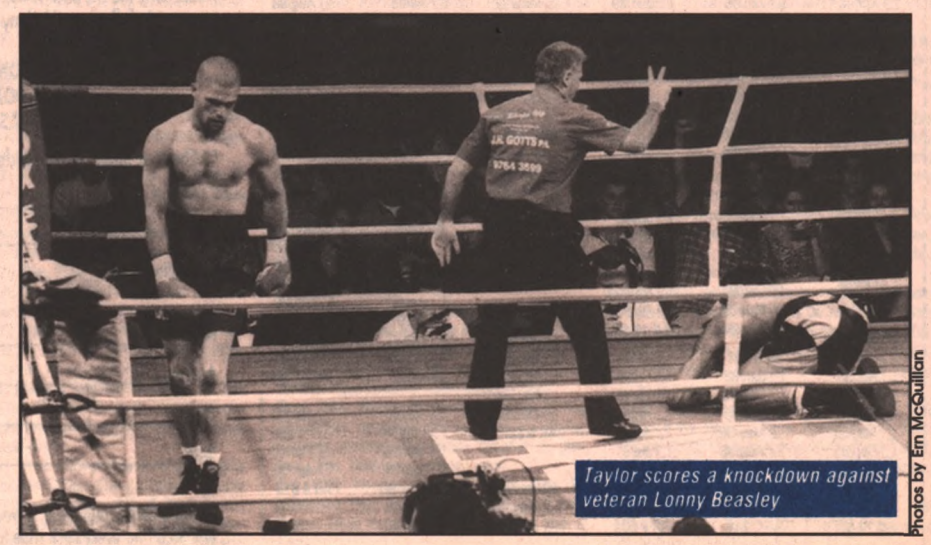
By Joe Santoliquito



He could cut paper with his eyes around fight time. If Bambi got in his way during one of his solitary morning runs, Bambi would be roadkill. Anyone who knows Shannan Taylor knows to stay away a few weeks before a fight. The tell-tale signs are all there: curt behavior, surliness, and a razor-sharp squint. It's hide-the-women-and-children time, or in the Australian welterweight's mind, *it's Shannan Time.*

Taylor likes to roil inside before he explodes in the ring—a kind of storm-before-the-storm approach. He trains in much the same manner as his idols, Marvin Hagler, Roberto Duran, and Mike Tyson. The 5'10" Taylor is a rangy fighter with a straight-on style who attracts packed houses in his hometown of Bulli, located on the south coast of Australia just outside the city of Wollongong. "The Bulli Blaster's" goal is to take his 24-0-1 (16) record abroad and conquer America. Not many American boxing fans are aware of Taylor yet, but this year he could break free of that obscurity. He was ranked number four in the WBC as of press time, right behind Oscar De La

(Continued on page 62)



Taylor scores a knockdown against veteran Lonny Beasley

Photos by Em McQuillan

PRO RECORD

1992		
July 10	Darryl Hiles, Wollongong, Australia	KO 2
Nov. 13	Brian Williams, Melbourne, Australia	KO 8
1993		
Feb. 12	Shane Riley, Perth, Australia	KO 10
Sept. 11	Larry Sarmiento, Dapto, Australia	W Disq. 2
Nov. 26	Luis Maysonet, Newcastle, Australia	W 10
1994		
Jan. 22	Bert Navares, Dapto	W 10
March 16	Pita Tabuarua, Dapto	KO 1
July 9	Monty Bhana, Dapto	KO 2
Oct. 19	Alberto Machong, Dapto	KO 3
Dec. 4	Ilaitia Vaka, Fiji	KO 4
1995		
May 29	Buck Smith, Parramatta, Australia	Tech. Win 5
July 31	Dwayne Swift, Tweed Heads, Australia	KO 3
Sept. 25	Willy Wise, Dapto	KO 2
Nov. 27	Livingstone Bramble, Toowoomba, Australia	KO 1
1996		
March 30	Corey Johnson, Dublin, Ireland	D 10
July 30	Teddy Carradine, Shellharbour, Australia	KO 1
Dec. 21	Jake Rodriguez, Wollongong	KO 3
1997		
April 4	Sean Sullivan, Wollongong	W 10
July 18	Victor Baranov, Thirroul, Australia	W 10
Nov. 7	Carlos Malaga, Thirroul	KO 3
1998		
Feb. 27	Antonio Rivera, Wollongong	KO 1
May 21	Jose Benitez, Wollongong	W 10
Sept. 25	Sukhyun Yun, Wollongong	Tech. Win 6
1999		
April 16	Fabian Saporiti, Wollongong	KO 1
July 9	Lonny Beasley, Wollongong	KO 3

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DRAW	KOs
25	24	0	1	16

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Example: Lennox Lewis KOs David Tua to defend his title. Lewis picks up 3 points for the win, 1 for the KO, 1 for defending his title, and 1 for fighting a top 10 contender, for a total of 6 points. Tua loses 3 points for the loss and 1 for the KO, but gains 1 point for fighting a champ resulting in a loss of 3 points

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- ❑ Naseem Hamed
- ❑ Mark Johnson
- ❑ Roy Jones Jr.
- ❑ Floyd Mayweather
- ❑ Erik Morales
- ❑ Shane Mosley
- ❑ Felix Trinidad

Exs
- ❑ Cesar Bazan
- ❑ Michael Carbajal
- ❑ Hector Camacho
- ❑ Antonio Cermeno
- ❑ Julio Cesar Chavez
- ❑ Luisito Espinosa
- ❑ Evander Holyfield
- ❑ Mike Tyson

Up & Comers
- ❑ Hassan Al
- ❑ Lamon Brewster
- ❑ Hector Camacho Jr.
- ❑ Guty Espadas Jr.
- ❑ Vivian Harris
- ❑ Derrick Jefferson
- ❑ Agapito Sanchez
- ❑ Cory Spinks

Close to the Top
- ❑ Tim Austin
- ❑ Paulie Ayala
- ❑ Marco A. Barrera
- ❑ Diego Corrales
- ❑ Bernard Hopkins
- ❑ William Joppy
- ❑ Lennox Lewis
- ❑ Ricardo Lopez

In Command
- ❑ Nestor Garza
- ❑ Stevie Johnston
- ❑ Sharmba Mitchell
- ❑ Freddie Norwood
- ❑ David Reid
- ❑ Paul Spadafora
- ❑ Kastya Tszyu
- ❑ Fernando Vargas

Ranked What?
- ❑ Henry Akinwande
- ❑ Brian Barbosa
- ❑ Larry Donald
- ❑ Raul Frank
- ❑ Tracy H. Patterson
- ❑ John Ruiz
- ❑ Rito Ruvalcaba
- ❑ Alberto Siccurella

Heavy Contenders
- ❑ Chris Byrd
- ❑ Michael Grant
- ❑ Ike Ibeabuchi
- ❑ Kirk Johnson
- ❑ Vitaly Klitschko
- ❑ Wladimir Klitschko
- ❑ Oleg Maskaev
- ❑ David Tua

More Contenders
- ❑ Antwun Echols
- ❑ Julio Cesar Green
- ❑ Richard Hall
- ❑ Robert McCracken
- ❑ Lovemore N'Dou
- ❑ Antonio Tarver
- ❑ David Telesco
- ❑ Clinton Woods

Smaller Contenders
- ❑ Jesus Chavez
- ❑ Derrell Coley
- ❑ Vernon Forrest
- ❑ Acelino Freitas
- ❑ Ahmed Kotiev
- ❑ Andrew Lewis
- ❑ Shannon Taylor
- ❑ Michael Trabant

No Respect
- ❑ Javier Castillejo
- ❑ In Joo Cho
- ❑ Keith Holmes
- ❑ Paul Ingle
- ❑ Manuel Medina
- ❑ Byron Mitchell
- ❑ James Page
- ❑ Gilberto Serrano

Oh, So Close
- ❑ Randall Bailey
- ❑ Joel Cassamayor
- ❑ Zab Judah
- ❑ D. Michalszewski
- ❑ Eric Morel
- ❑ Omar Sheika
- ❑ Harry Simon
- ❑ Ike Quartey

Wee Contenders
- ❑ Johnny Bredahl
- ❑ Mbulelo Botile
- ❑ Julio Pablo Chacon
- ❑ Billy Irwin
- ❑ Angel Manfredy
- ❑ Wayne McCullough
- ❑ Billy Schwer
- ❑ Johnny Tapia

More Exposure
- ❑ David Izon
- ❑ Kofi Jantuah
- ❑ Robbie Peden
- ❑ Jason Pires
- ❑ Mamadou Thiam
- ❑ Oktay Ukral
- ❑ Lance Whitaker
- ❑ Rick Yoshimura

Europa
- ❑ Thomas Daamgaard
- ❑ Artur Grigorian
- ❑ Julien Lorcy
- ❑ Jean B. Mendy
- ❑ Brian Nielsen
- ❑ D Holbaek Pedersen
- ❑ G. Rocchigiani
- ❑ Burt Schenk

Could Be a Factor
- ❑ Lincoln Carter
- ❑ Hassine Cherifi
- ❑ Eric Harding
- ❑ Juan Marquez
- ❑ Ivan Robinson
- ❑ Dana Rosenblatt
- ❑ Syd Vanderpoole
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RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?

And now, as Paul Harvey likes to say, the rest of the story …

Johnny Tapia outpoints Jorge Eliecer Julio: Some long-time Tapia watchers felt uneasy about this fight. It wasn't Tapia's deflation over his June loss to Paulie Ayala, a six-month layoff, or Julio's potent right hand and 42-1 record that had the folks in Albuquerque, New Mexico, jittery. It was speculation that local hero Tapia would lack his old fury following the solving of his mother's murder case.

Finally learning who had committed the 1975 crime, and also discovering that the murderer himself had died after being hit by a car in 1983, trapped Tapia in a cyclone of emotions. He was relieved, sure, but a huge part of him felt empty, cheated out of the chance to one day confront the killer either in a courtroom or on the street. For weeks this past autumn, Tapia was so confused and distracted that he seriously contemplated retirement.

After speaking with Tapia on Christmas Eve, and with his wife, Teresa, on New Year's Eve, it was clear to me that a love of his craft and the need to make money were his reasons for facing Julio, but that Tapia's inner turmoil still hadn't been fully resolved. So what happened on fight night? Tapia looked the best he has since he outpointed hometown nemesis Danny Romero in July 1997. Go figure.

A fighter who turned 33 in February, has a history of drug use, competes in the lighter-weight classes, and has fought 50 times (including 83 rounds in his last eight outings), isn't supposed to be able to stay at the top this long. No matter how good he is defensively. Tapia told me he wants to fight another three or four years, and while the immediate reaction is to think he's going to turn old overnight, it's possible to envision him pulling off upsets and repeatedly confounding experts the way a thirtysomething Daniel Zaragoza did.

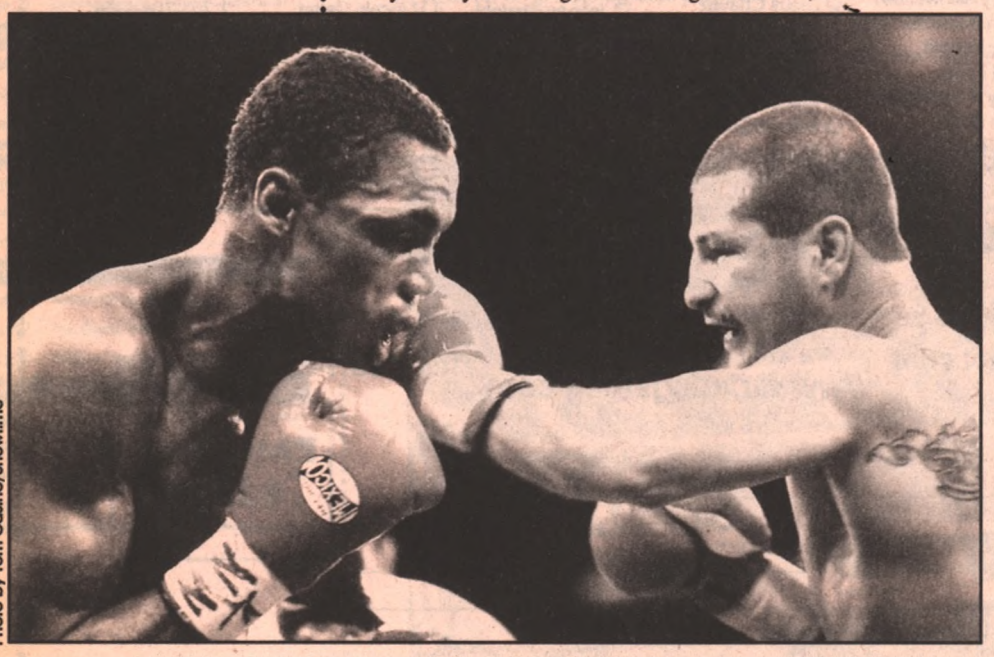


Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime

Tapia was simply spectacular against Julio

"This is all I know how to do," said Tapia. "Put me in an eight-hour job and I'll get fired. My mouth will be going all day and no work will get done. I've had cuts and bruises, but I've never taken a beating, because I'm a warrior *and* a technician. My anger is what will keep me going. I don't agree with people who say you shouldn't fight with anger. I've always been angry in the ring, and I still am."

And if that anger ever starts to wane, trainer Freddie Roach should be able to fix the problem immediately. All he has to do is remind Tapia that he and Ayala made about $310,000 combined for engaging in

1999's Fight of the Year, while Oscar De La Hoya and Felix Trinidad shared about 100 times that for mailing in the year's biggest disappointment.

That could keep the steam shooting out of Tapia's ears, and the veins popping in his neck, until he's 50.

Oscar De La Hoya records a pop album: Move over Ricky Martin. There's a new Latin heartthrob who can make the ladies swoon with his croon. Rumor has it that the first single to be released from the album will be a tune about "The Golden Boy's" performances in his biggest bouts: "Livin' La Vida Choka."

Lennox Lewis-Michael Grant is signed for April: Is there any chance in hell Grant would have gotten the phone call if he hadn't looked so beatable against Andrew Golota? Of course not. Had he controlled that showdown from the opening bell, and not hit the canvas twice, Grant would still be thumbing through magazines and listening to bad Muzak while sitting next to a dust-covered David Tua in the heavyweight contenders' waiting room.

Judging by Grant's vulnerability to the right hand, which just happens to be Lewis' most powerful punch, you'd expect this bout to be as competitive as Jim Brown vs. his wife's car. And my prediction *is* Lewis by knockout within seven rounds. But we shouldn't be shocked if Grant turns this into a tough challenge and throws a little concern into the singing, flag-waving Britons in the cheap seats.

That's because Lewis never seems to fight impressively against anyone anymore. He could take Grant lightly after watching the challenger get bounced off the canvas by Golota. Or the heavyweight king might be looking ahead to a Mike Tyson fight. Throw in Lewis' history of subpar performances at Madison Square Garden (see Lewis-Ray Mercer and Lewis-Evander Holyfield I) and the confidence Grant gained by coming back from the verge of a knockout loss to make Golota quit, and maybe we have a good fight here.

If we don't, you're still not going to hear me complain. For a long time, I've wanted to see the young turks like Grant, Tua, Ike Ibeabuchi, and Kirk Johnson get their chance at the top prize. The near-miss with Golota has soiled Grant to some degree, but "Grant vs. Lewis" still looks nice on the posters and the Garden marquee, so I'm not about to look a gift horse in the mouthpiece.

Mike Tyson chooses his next batting-practice fastball: The ex-champ's March foe is going to be Lou Savarese, who was retired the last time we looked. (Okay, to tell you the truth, we didn't care enough to actually look.) *Lou Savarese*? What happened? Team Tyson found out Marvis Frazier was busy that day?

Wasn't the object of this latest Tyson return to gory supposed to be regaining respectability and the heavyweight crown by the end of 2000? If so, then please explain to me how pouncing on the game but lame Savarese prepares Tyson for the style and power of Lewis?

The answer is that it doesn't prepare him at all. What's going on here is that the Tyson camp isn't sure "Scrap Iron" Mike can beat *anybody* good anymore, and doesn't want him facing an opponent who's actually breathing until a title bout materializes. Whether it's Roy Jones, who ducks no one, or Gerry Cooney, who spent his prime avoiding any semblance of dangerous competition, we've always been able to judge exactly what a fighter thinks of himself by whom he's willing to fight. It's a foolproof window to the soul.

Does anyone really want to see this guy fight Tyson?

Photo by Frank Vitucci

Tyson's original opponent was supposed to be Shannon Briggs, who hails from Tyson's old turf of Brownsville, Brooklyn. Briggs was reportedly rejected because, despite his limitations and struggle with Tyson knockout victim Frans Botha last year, the dreadlocked ex-linear titlist was considered too mobile for the 33-year-old version of Tyson.

Geez, remember the old days, when Tyson walked with a swagger, proclaimed himself to be the baddest man on the planet, and ducked no one? How the mighty have fallen. Today, Tyson and his handlers don't believe he's even the baddest man in Brownsville. ■

CAMERA CLICKS

Photo by Ray Bailey

Singing about Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, Bob Dylan said, "He coulda been the champion of the world." Well, it's probably a little late for that now, but maybe the young man posing here with Carter, promising welterweight John Molnar, can still fulfill that dream. The two fighters met up recently at the All-Star Cafe in New York City.

Photo by Marty Rosengarten

Even if Ike Ibeabuchi won the heavyweight championship of the world and Shane Mosley knocked out Oscar De La Hoya on the same night, promoter Cedric Kushner probably still wouldn't crack a smile. HBO Senior Vice President Lou DiBella is doing his best to turn Kushner's frown around, but he'd probably have better luck hiring a few weightlifters to hold the South African upside-down by the ankles to give the illusion of a smile.

Photo by Chris Farina

"I am not a crook!" Promoter Dan Goossen of America Presents sure looks like he's doing his Richard Nixon impression in this photo, and if IBF middleweight champ Bernard Hopkins had absolute power, we have a feeling "Tricky Dan" would have been impeached by now.

Photo by Frank Vitucci

We know they say protect yourself at all times, but this is ridiculous. Heavyweight Erol Sadikovski doesn't seem capable of protecting himself at this moment, and referee Jim Santa, though trying his darndest, isn't doing much to protect him from the excessive wrath of Kelvin Davis, either.

It's a special fathers-and-sons edition of "Camera Clicks": Prior to his recent bout with Bruno Girard, WBA super middleweight champ Byron Mitchell (left) posed with his son, Byron Jr.; and after scoring a win over Gary St. Clair, junior welter prospect Vivian Harris (below) showed off his youngster, V.J.

Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime

Photo by Ray Bailey

NOSTALGIA CORNER

"Who is that handsome man in the mirror?" Jim Lampley preps for the Roy Jones-David Telesco show, while a Dick Butkus look-alike presents the HBO blow-by-blow man with a glimpse of his reflection.

Photo by Frank Vitucci

And you think today's matchmakers are bad! Back in 1973, heavyweight kayo artist Earnie Shavers squared off against tiny terror Tiger Smalls, who was approximately the size of one of Shavers' legs. Apparently Smalls didn't provide Shavers with the prep work he needed, as Jerry Quarry decked Shavers in the first round soon after this photo was taken.

McCullough's magnificent chin is tested by Johnny Bredahl in a 1995 bout that the Irishman won via eighth-round TKO. Since then, however, his cement-like mandible has withstood the blows of fighters who punch much harder than the Dane.

Photo by Marc Y. Morris

Photo by Marty Rosengarten

When You Take As Many Punches As Wayne McCullough Does, You Need It!

By Brian Doogan

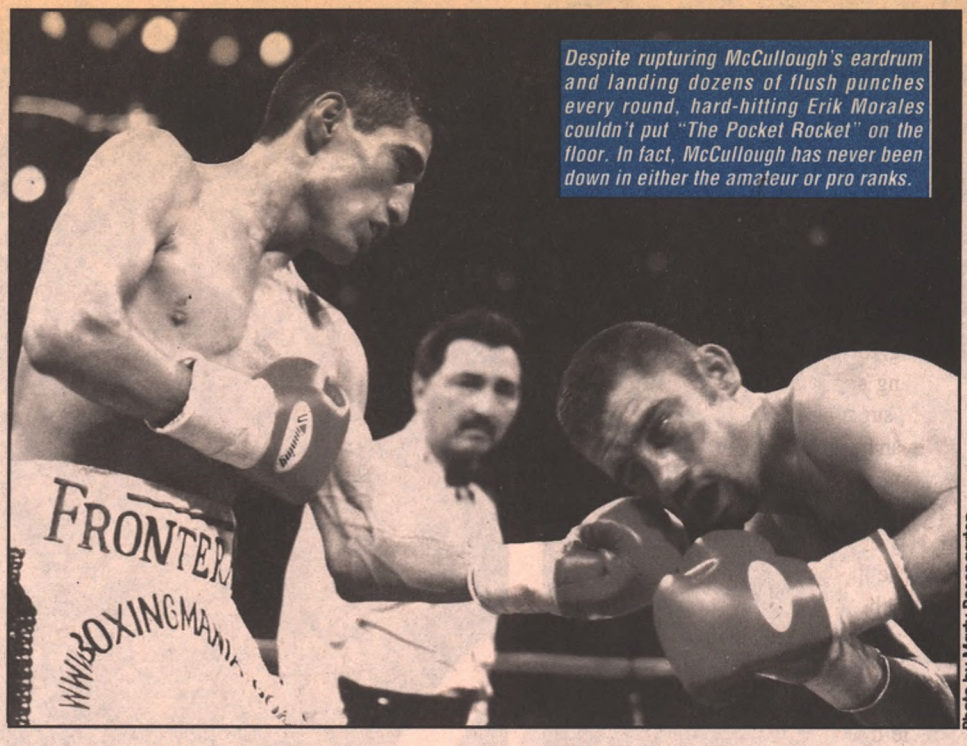
THE BEST CHIN IN BOXING

Lathered in grease, sometimes blood, and concealed partially beneath sweat and stubble, the chin is an area of mystery that may defy reason, but more often than not defines the fighter. It may not be his most distinguishing feature, but he is never likely to excel in his art if he is not blessed with a good one.

The physics of it is brutal in its simplicity. The anomaly is that a fighter can absorb such traumatizing impact to his chin at all. Shock waves to the brain result in its reverberation inside the skull, leading ultimately to concussion. The chin, being the cranium's most exposed and vulnerable target area—and the point that will cause the maximum swivel of the head, and therefore jarring of the brain when struck—is the spot at which fighters aim their knockout punch. The hardest hitters do it to devastating effect. Those with the recuperative powers to resist it are as awesome as those who inflict the destruction.

Muhammad Ali had more to his game than most, but would not have spent 15 years at the pinnacle of heavyweight boxing had his chin not been able to withstand the terrible blows of fearsome punchers like George Foreman, Joe Frazier, and Earnie Shavers. Jake LaMotta, because of his sound chin, was able to boast at the end of 13 rounds with Sugar Ray Robinson, in a fight exalted in the annals as "The St. Valentine's Day Massacre," that although he had been battered, Robinson never put him down. Henry Armstrong and Roberto Duran moved through the weights and, apart from Duran's capitulation to Tommy Hearns, retained their ability to take the best punches of heavier men. And Marvin Hagler, who remained at middleweight throughout his career, proved his chin and much more in a ferocious battle with Hearns that may be the ultimate example of the value of a good chin. Bereft of one, old Marvelous would have been stoned by Hearns inside one round.

Wayne McCullough is not to be found on any pound-for-pound list of today's best fighters. But the Las Vegas-based Irishman's powers of resistance and recovery against the withering power of the likes of Naseem Hamed and the brilliant Erik Morales support claims that he is the current holder of the best chin in boxing. As an amateur or professional he has never been knocked off his feet, much less stopped—compelling credentials that have confirmed his reputation as one of the more formidable adversaries between bantam and featherweight. While growing up amid Northern Ireland's "Troubles" in battle-weary Belfast possibly instilled increased hardness in his formative years, McCullough's resilience is more probably innate, a strong constitution backed up by an unwavering will.



Despite rupturing McCullough's eardrum and landing dozens of flush punches every round, hard-hitting Erik Morales couldn't put "The Pocket Rocket" on the floor. In fact, McCullough has never been down in either the amateur or pro ranks.

Photo by Marty Rosengarten

"I've always been able to take a punch, since I was a kid," declared McCullough, whose soft, dark eyes and gentle demeanor never convey Samson-like qualities. "I sparred with professionals when I was still really young, so that probably got me physically and mentally used to it. When Morales hit me hard, I just gritted my teeth and shouted to him, 'Hit me harder.' I actually wanted him to hit me harder. The harder he hit, the more mad it made me."

Madness. Maybe that is the key.

"It probably is mad to invite that kind of punishment and pain," said the former WBC bantamweight champion. "My wife, Cheryl, always says that I have an evil eye when I'm in the ring. But it's more than that. It is a sense of invulnerability, an absolute belief that I cannot be beaten. I'm the type of guy who goes in to win all his fights. You would have to kill me to stop me when I'm in battle."

The extent of a fighter's ambition is unquestionably a factor in whether or how he will respond to trauma. Ali always maintained that the majority of vanquished men volunteer themselves on the floor.

"Most of 'em take a dive," he said, typically assertive.

McCullough acknowledges dark

Photo by Frank Vitucci

Naseem Hamed discovered early in his fight with McCullough that his normally devastating punches had little effect on the challenger. So instead of going for the kayo, "The Prince" fought a defensive fight that drew boos from the crowd.

moments during the Morales bout when he considered complicity in the quick exit.

"You get hit hard, and there's something inside that says, *lie down*. Then the mean side insists, *no way*," McCullough revealed. "In the fourth round, Morales hurt me and burst my eardrum. I experienced this once before, against Jose Bueno in Dublin in 1996. My resistance was low and my blood pressure wrong because of having to make the weight. It was an alarming experience, not lessened when a doctor suggested it was beyond him how I had managed to stay in there with the pain.

"But you have to show your fighting heart. Against Morales, I knew I had already endured that level of pain. I knew when he hit me on the ear—and he hit me there about 20 or 30 times—what to expect. It throws your balance mainly. I went back to the corner and told my trainer, Kenny Croom, what I was thinking. But he doesn't understand what I'm saying most of the time anyway, and paid no heed."

The warriors' embrace between Morales and McCullough at the final bell reflected the purity of their shared endeavor. For Morales it was a particularly humbling experience. Men have fallen under a 20th of the damage he inflicted on McCullough, but the Irishman refused to be moved.

TODAY'S TOP 10 CHINS

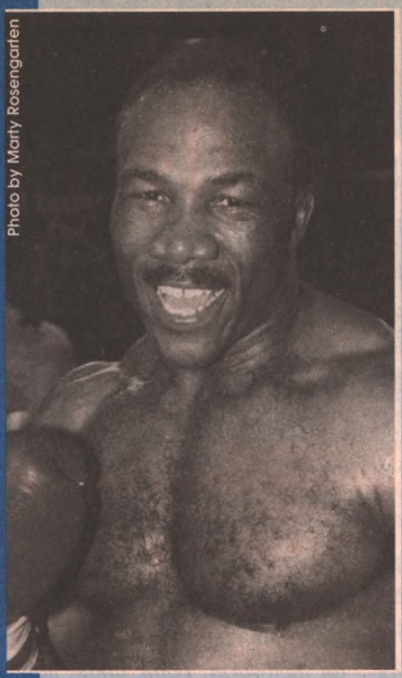


Photo by Marty Rosengarten

Wilson's chin is among the very best

1. Wayne McCullough
2. Marion Wilson
3. Evander Holyfield
4. Arturo Gatti
5. Jose Luis Lopez
6. Vinny Pazienza
7. Ray Mercer
8. Johnny Tapia
9. Julio Cesar Chavez
10. David Tua

For readers who question Wilson's high ranking, we offer this partial list of opponents who have failed to stop the heavyweight journeyman: Ray Mercer, Andrew Golota, Shannon Briggs, Obed Sullivan, Jimmy Thunder, Ike Ibeabuchi, Kirk Johnson, Frans Botha, Zeljko Mavrovic, Oleg Maskaev, and Derrick Jefferson. Enough said.

Later, McCullough revealed that, of the two, he regards Morales as a harder puncher than Hamed, though not as physically strong. This was of small consolation to the Mexican who wanted badly to be the first man to knock McCullough out, but had to settle for a points decision after 12 sometimes furious rounds.

"Afterward, I went into his dressing room, and he was lying down on a massage table," said McCullough, who will be 30 in July. "He got up and was holding his stomach. I asked him if he was okay. He took off his track-suit top and gave it to me. I looked at him, and his face was in bits, swollen with two black eyes. Some guys I know saw him leaving the airport the next day and said it looked like he had been in a car accident. He hits hard, but it wasn't all one-way traffic."

Photo by Marty Rosengarten

McCullough's wife, Cheryl, says her husband has the "evil eye" when he gets into the ring. McCullough says it's more a matter of willpower and belief in himself that keeps him on his feet when the going gets tough.

It is a compatriot of Morales' whom McCullough believes has hit him hardest.

"Victor Rabanales connected flush with an uppercut in an early round of our WBC international bantamweight title bout in 1994," McCullough recalled. "All of a sudden I was in my hotel room, watching TV with Cheryl. I was in this time warp for about five seconds. I believe I was knocked out on my feet. I just kept my hands up and moved. It was instinctive. In the reality of my mind, I was someplace else.

"When I came to, I saw three Rabanaleses for about 10 more seconds. Most fighters, I guess, would have fallen. They would be overwhelmed by what was happening. Even in a state of semi-consciousness, I would not yield, not even with three Rabanaleses standing there on front of me!"

Though the kind of tough-man status McCullough has acquired can be lucrative,

(Continued on page 63)

WHAT IF...?

Join Us As *The Ring* Re-Writes Recent History

By Ted Bodenrader

A sedan is whipping along the freeway at breakneck speed—straight down the passing lane—as it approaches the oncoming exit. The driver attempts to switch lanes, and, perhaps because of the car phone in his ear, perhaps out of pure laziness, he fails to flick on his turn signal.

The sports car whizzing up the middle lane never anticipates this move, as the sedan shifts aimlessly into the lane. What the operators of these two vehicles don't realize is that a thousand lives will be affected by this very moment, some far more dramatically than others.

As the two cars collide to become a worthless heap of metal scraps, the chain reaction that ensues causes a pileup beyond recognition, a disaster that will soon pour paramedic vans, police cars, ambulances, and tow trucks into this ungodly mix.

Sometimes, the consequences require more than just first aid kits. Sometimes, they require body bags.

On a lesser scale, there are hundreds more—cursing furiously within their idling cars—who will be late for their crucial business meetings or their important engagements or who will miss their dinner dates and their social gatherings altogether. Think about it the next time you're lodged amid the horrific aftermath, the parking lot that stretches through three area codes, the traffic moving along at the velocity of an inchworm. Think about how easily it could have been avoided.

By a lousy blinking light. One quick flick of the wrist.

And that's precisely how devastating accidents happen, whether on a paved freeway or on that square canvas known as a prize ring.

In boxing, it can sometimes be the blink of an eye, the snap of a shoulder, or the bob that should have been a weave, that can cause such a mishap. Other times, it can be a simple signature scribbled on a contract, or a single digit calculated on a judge's scorecard, that can sorely provide all the difference, changing the face of the game as we see it.

The effects of one minute twitch, or of one instantaneous decision, can dramatically alter the lives of boxers, trainers, managers, promoters, television executives, and anyone within a promotional camp or a nearby weight class, whether they're directly involved with the crash or not.

As we know, to dwell over the "what ifs" of our game has proven to be an unproductive and meaningless waste of time. But, hey, sometimes, when we're bogged down in traffic, as our imagination separates us from the dreadful jam, we just can't help thinking about these fascinating "what if" scenarios that engaged us over the past year.

Did Paulie Ayala really deserve his unanimous decision over Johnny Tapia? Or were the judges influenced at all by Bob Arum? One thing's for sure: If the decision had gone the other way, Ayala wouldn't have been our Fighter of the Year.

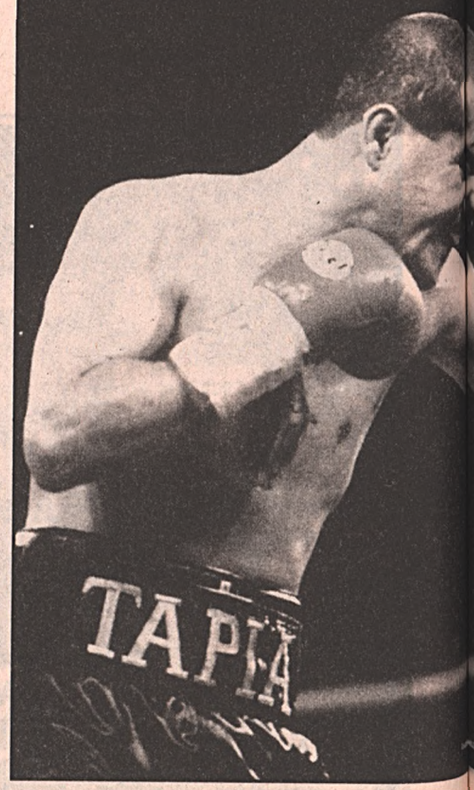
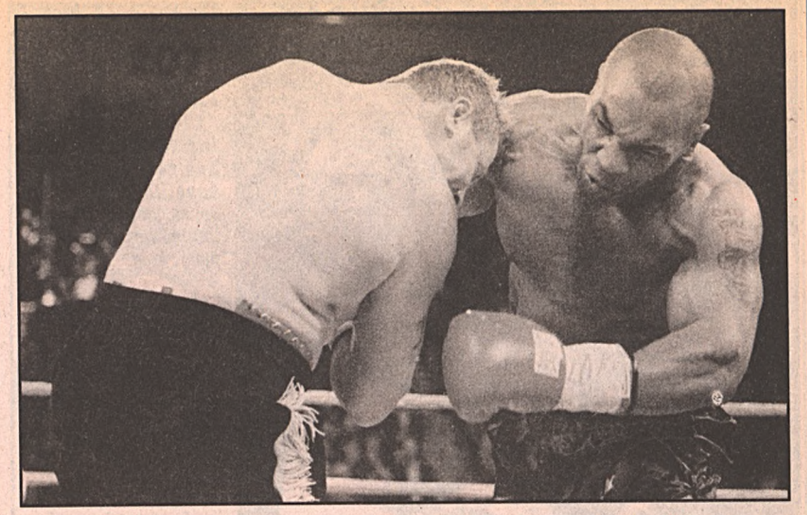


Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime

WHAT IF FRANS BOTHA HADN'T BLINKED?

He closed his eyes for a split second, probably to envision the millions he'd be swimming in, or the beachside lounge chair he'd be snoozing on, and—*kaboom*—just like that, Francois Botha was on his backside all right. Although he was hardly basking in the tropics, his senses were certainly a million miles away, as he scrambled frantically to regain his footing atop the MGM Grand Garden canvas.

Many observers felt that it was overconfidence and carelessness—and not Mike Tyson's deafening right hand on his chin—that kept "The White Buffalo" from pulling off the unthinkable. Five more rounds of what he was doing—clubbing Iron Mike into submission—would have instantly whisked the unlikely hero from South Africa into the same breath as Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis and dropped him into a lucrative heavyweight hierarchy.



You blink ... you sink. A split second is all it takes for a puncher like Mike Tyson to drop the hammer, and with one right hand, he kept his own career alive while denying Frans Botha countless millions.

It also would have forced even the most loyal of Tyson backers to admit that Tyson is no closer to his prime than Liz Taylor. By boxing standards, he would have been little more than a washed-up hag.

And instead of leaving us as we are now, asking each other "What if?" about Botha's game efforts, the impoverished Tyson, with his career, his appeal, and his bank account in utter shambles, would have been turning to manager Shelly Finkel, asking a far different question:

"What now?"

WHAT IF JOHNNY TAPIA HAD SIGNED THE DOTTED LINE?

When Johnny Tapia bitched and moaned following his loss to Paulie Ayala that he was the victim of his own decision to sever ties with Top Rank promoter Bob Arum, most people shrugged it off as the sour grapes excuses of a sore loser.

Tapia may well have been sore, but he is certainly not a loser. So let's give him the benefit of the doubt for a moment. Perhaps he was right. Perhaps if he had signed on the bottom line with Arum and remained securely at Top Rank headquarters, he would still be the WBA bantamweight champion today.

Instead, Tapia's too-close-to-call loss to the relatively unheralded challenger, his last fight on his contract with Arum, was more of a going-away present from Top Rank. Tapia's first career loss was like a dead rat wrapped in a box, a delivery from an old friend who had quickly transformed into a most bitter nemesis. If Tapia had re-signed to fight for Arum, it's quite conceivable that the three ringside judges would have seen Tapia-Ayala a

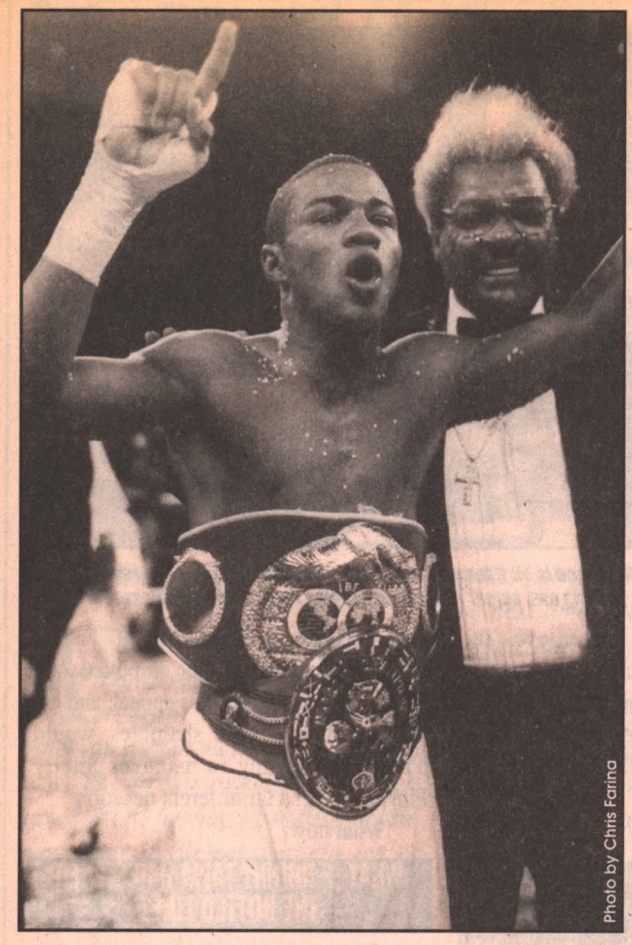


Photo by Chris Farina

Oscar De La Hoya's decision to hand Felix Trinidad the last few rounds of their September '99 meeting made "Tito" and Don King two very happy men. Another fellow who benefited was Roy Jones, now the all-but-undisputed pound-for-pound king.

tad differently. We're not suggesting overt foul play, but it's well-known that judges do sometimes favor the fighter who is better connected politically. If Tapia remained Top Ranked, he could still be undefeated.

Meanwhile, Ayala's gutsy, courageous effort would have been forgotten by sunrise and the 118-pound banger from Fort Worth, instead of being named THE RING's Fighter of the Year, would have been subtly tossed back into the pit of obscurity along with all the other Winky Wrights of the world.

WHAT IF OSCAR HAD FINISHED?

He punched Felix Trinidad squarely in the nose, bloodying it, drenching the Puerto Rican welterweight's trunks with streaks of blood. The next substantial punch from Oscar De La Hoya would come a few rounds later. It would come when he punched out of work for the night, some 15 minutes early, without finishing the job.

It was sometime around the ninth round when De La Hoya, sitting atop a sizable lead, started running from Trinidad as if he were the Blair Witch. But it makes us wonder about things, months later, as Puerto Ricans talk about naming a holiday after the faintly victorious Trinidad, and as a million others liken De La Hoya to a Purdue chicken.

What if Oscar had fought to the finish line?

Well, two things are certain: Promoter Arum's frown would be turned upside down, and De La Hoya would be looking more and more Golden—and not quite so yellow.

Perhaps the top beneficiary of the Plight of the Millennium was quietly sitting nearby with a headset strapped over his ears. As Trinidad was fitted for the WBC title belt that few felt he earned, Roy Jones, providing analysis for TVKO, claimed beyond any reasonable doubt the mythical pound-for-pound title, as his two chief rivals for the honor, Trinidad and De La Hoya, had just knocked each other out of that fight.

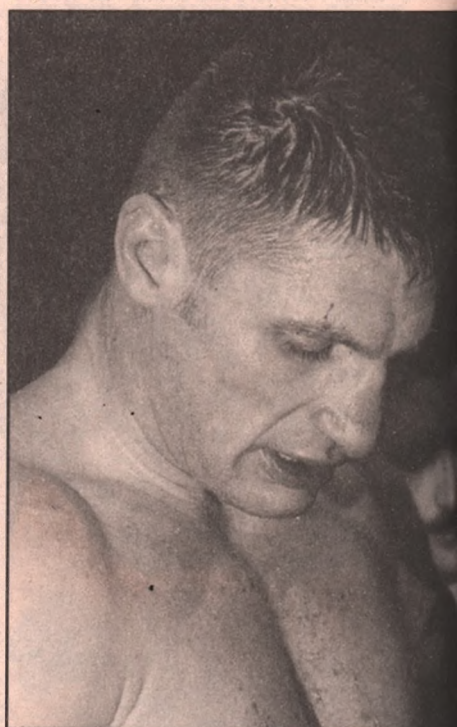
To Jones, probably still wondering how De La Hoya had previously slipped ahead of him in the pound-for-pound race, especially through gift-wrapped decisions over Pernell Whitaker and Ike Quartey, it all made about as much sense as astrophysics. Nonetheless, a De La Hoya victory over Trinidad would have further widened that gap between he and Jones.

But as it turns out, just like the light heavyweight championship, the holder of pound-for-pound supremacy is no longer in dispute. No, Jones doesn't need De La Hoya's track shoes to run away with that one.

WHAT IF ANDREW GOLOTA HAD SAID "YES"?

"You wanna fight? You wanna fight? You wanna fight?"

We knew the answer to referee Randy Neumann's question before the reluctant Andrew Golota even blurted it out. Just as it had when he twice faced Riddick Bowe, the element of surrender fluttered deeply in Golota's eyes. Like Bowe, Michael Grant was the unlucky recipient of a one-way beating, and, like Bowe, Grant was displaying tremendous heart and courage in rallying back.



Michael Grant's booming right hand (right) helped him pull off a miracle win against Andrew Golota and earn a shot at the undisputed heavyweight title. But if Golota (above) had even the slightest trace of a fighting heart, he might be the man poised to fight Lennox Lewis.

But after Grant's miraculous comeback that floored Golota in the 10th round, what if Golota had instead replaced his answer to Neumann's question with a resounding "Yes"? What if Golota had shrugged off the pain and the exhaustion and tried to become something that he's never quite been before in a major fight—a winner?

If this had been the case, HBO executive Lou DiBella's hurricane-sized sigh of relief would have been replaced by a hideous cry, his newest meal ticket, Michael Grant, torn to shreds before his very eyes. As Lennox Lewis, sitting ringside, would have seen a date with Grant and an eight-figure paycheck evaporate into the Atlantic City air, the undisputed champ would have then been confined to a stinker of a rematch with Golota, whom he already whacked out inside of two disturbing minutes.

But after the detonation of November 20, perhaps there's an even greater "what if?" to ponder over. What if Andrew Golota had a heart? Or what if he had just half of one?

While the quality of a boxer's heart is what often separates a fighter from a quitter and a winner from a loser, in Golota's case, it could be preventing a dreadful shame from being the best big man in the game.

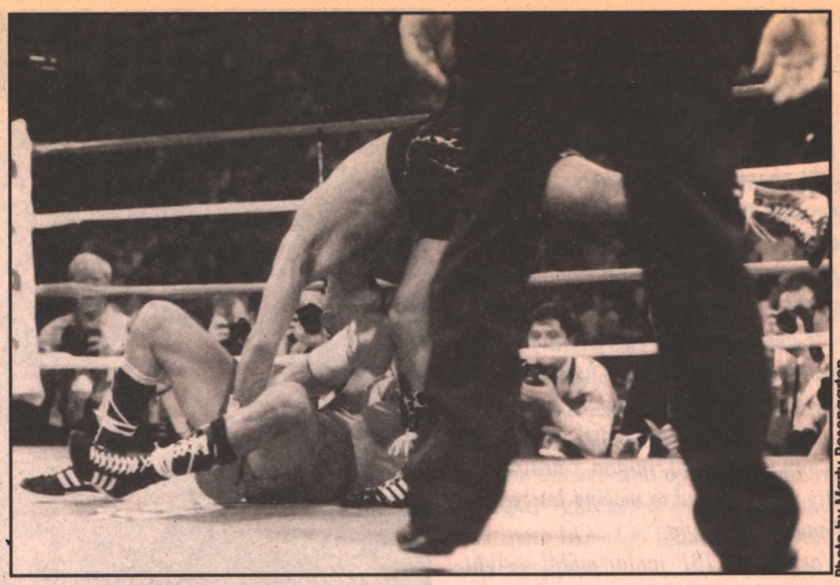


Photo by Marty Rosengarten

If referee Dale Grable had slapped Prince Naseem Hamed with a disqualified for this bodyslam, the featherweight division would have been turned upside-down just as Cesar Soto was. Many consider Hamed fortunate to still be undefeated.

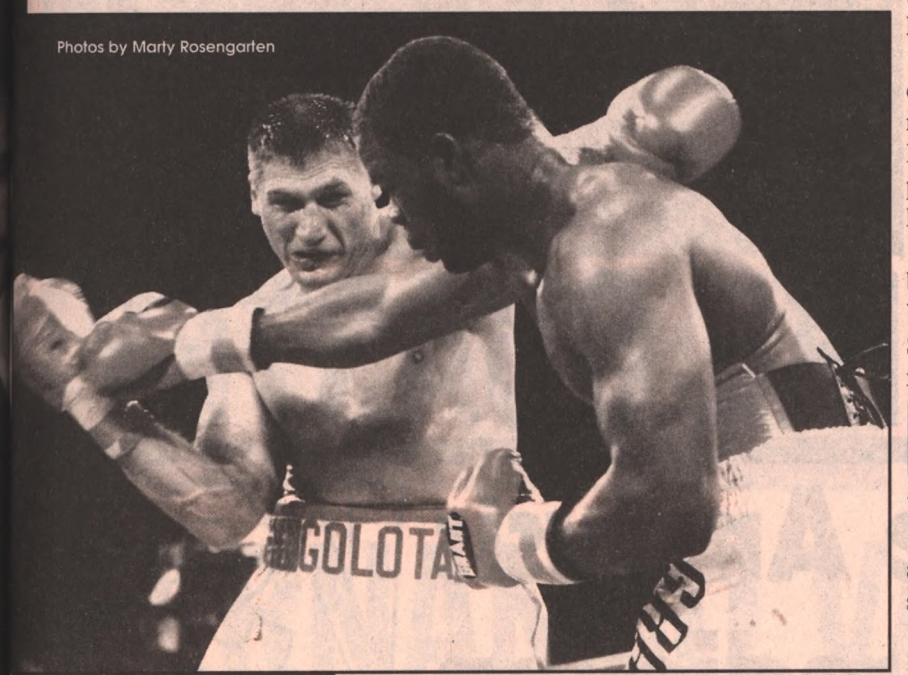
WHAT IF THE PRINCE HAD BEEN DISQUALIFIED?

With his theatrical ring entrances, Prince Naseem Hamed's fights have always been likened to pro wrestling fiascoes, but never did this take on more meaning than in Motown in October, when Hamed leveled Cesar Soto with a bodyslam that would've done Steve Austin proud. The maneuver was stone cold all right, with thousands of anti-Hamed Americans demanding that referee Dale Grable tag the undefeated featherweight with a fitting DQ. Hence, we ask ourselves, "What if he had?"

For one, boxing would have taken a resounding blow to the solar plexus, for nobody under 147 pounds generates the kind of excitement that the cocky Arab from England does. As long as the public's seething hatred for Hamed continues to boil, so will the featherweight division. Remember, in boxing, hate sells.

A disqualification would have swiftly deflated Hamed's appeal, and we'd be relying on unlikely candidates Erik Morales and Marco Antonio Barrera to pump the half-pints back to larger-than-life stature.

Meanwhile, as fast as Hamed would be signing up for WWF *Raw Is War*, Vince McMahon wouldn't be missing Sable at all anymore; he would have just found himself a new Princess.



Photos by Marty Rosengarten

WHAT IF? WHAT IF?

What if we could rev up a time machine and alter the past to create an entirely different landscape for the sport as we know it?

What if on November 13, 1999,

(Continued on page 63)

IKE QUARTEY Vs. FERNANDO VARGAS

Exclusive Analysis & Prediction

By D.E. Thomas

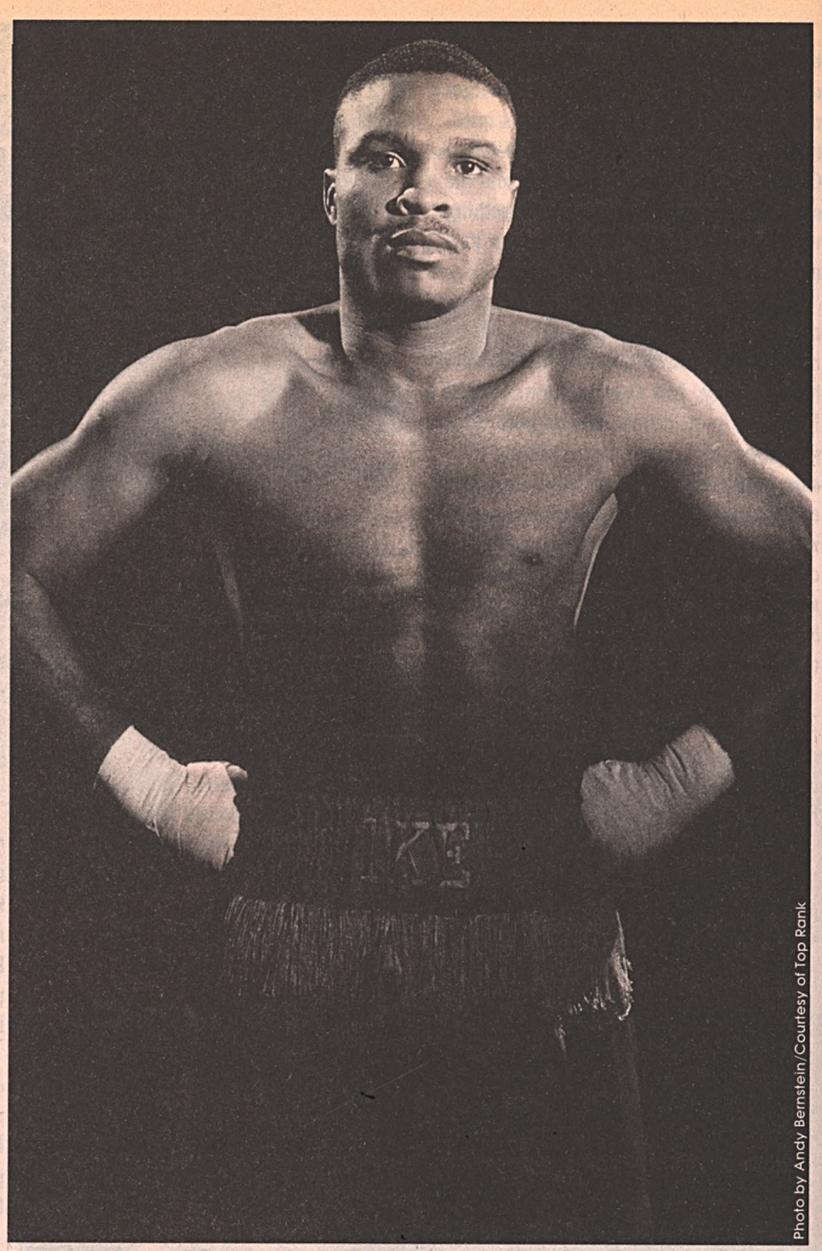


Photo by Andy Bernstein/Courtesy of Top Rank

Ike Quartey and Fernando Vargas got tired of waiting.

Quartey, the former WBA welterweight champion, got a taste of the big money and the exposure that goes with it when he fought Oscar De La Hoya all those months ago. He thought a rematch was inevitable, so he bided his time and waited for the offer to come. Promoter Bob Arum used him as an ace in the hole to bring Felix Trinidad to the bargaining table, and for a time it looked like Quartey would get his chance before Trinidad's braintrust finally came around to making last year's 147-pound megafight.

Vargas, the IBF junior middleweight champion, has been looking forward to the moment when he and fellow 154-pound champion David Reid would emerge as viable enough young stars to make a unification fight worth pursuing. In the meantime, he's gradually raised his stature by taking on some name contenders and building a following of his own. Of course, the real wait for Vargas has been for the time when the welterweight stars—namely De La Hoya and Trinidad—move up in weight and come to him.

All this waiting takes a toll, so someone finally got the idea to bring Vargas and Quartey together on April 15 at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas. When it happens, it will mark the beginning of a new era of prosperity for the junior middleweight division, a time when the talent begins to logjam at 154 pounds and, we can only hope, the top fighters all get in the ring to sort it out.

So how do Vargas, 18-0 (17), and Quartey, 34-1-1 (29), stack up against each other? Neither has really fought anyone quite like the other. Both are action fighters with loads of skill and talent, so the result should be worth the wait. Here's a look at how they matchup in several key categories:

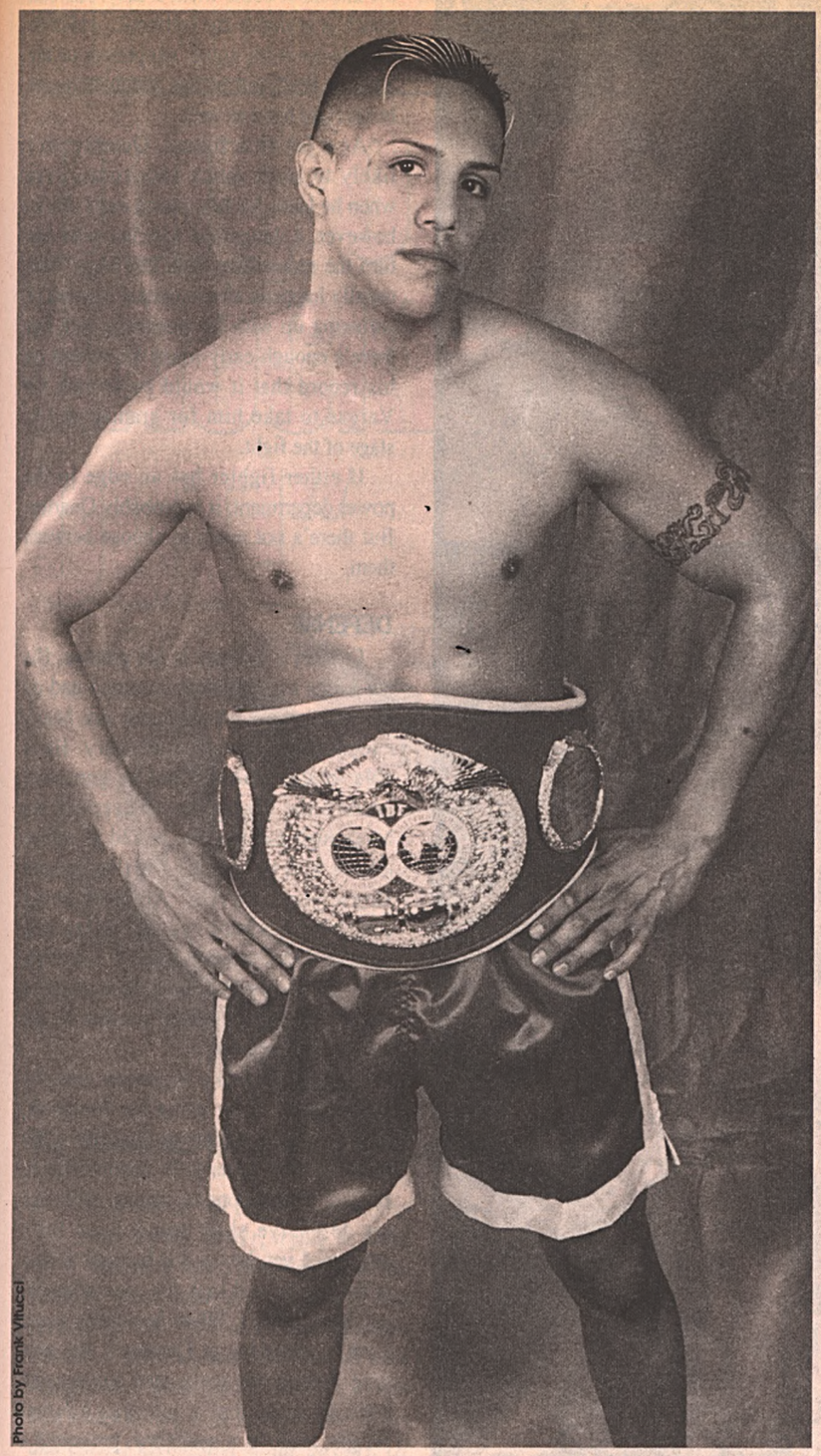


Photo by Frank Vitucci

THE STYLES

Vargas gives the impression that he is most comfortable as a walk-in slugger, a classic warrior from the old school, but a closer analysis shows that he is really more of a boxer-puncher with tremendous athletic ability and reflexes that allow him to invade the danger zone without really putting himself at too much risk. His battles with Yory Boy Campas and Raul Marquez, which established him as one of the best to come out of the Olympic class of 1996, showcased his skills as much as his grit. He completely outclassed those two one-dimensional opponents, nullifying their aggression and making them look more like club fighters than world-class competitors.

Vargas is at his best when he plays the angles, working in and out to get his punches off and escaping before the opponent can do anything about it. He is versatile and able to make adjustments as the fight goes on, as he did in his last outing to pull out a close verdict against Winky Wright.

Quartey likes to walk foes down with his thunderous left jab, pounding away as he moves forward and wearing them down with a steady diet of straight lefts. He imposes his will on opponents by committing to that jab to get the job done. He also has a snappy right hand and that sneaky short hook that put De La Hoya on the canvas. While he's far from flashy, Quartey is a complete fighter who can win by decision or knockout.

Both Vargas and Quartey are patient fighters, Quartey almost to a fault. Each is willing to take his time to set up shots and allow a game plan to take effect.

POWER

Neither fighter is really a one-punch knockout artist, although both have healthy knockout records.

Vargas is a combination puncher who likes to mix up his shots. He wears an opponent down with his attack and lets

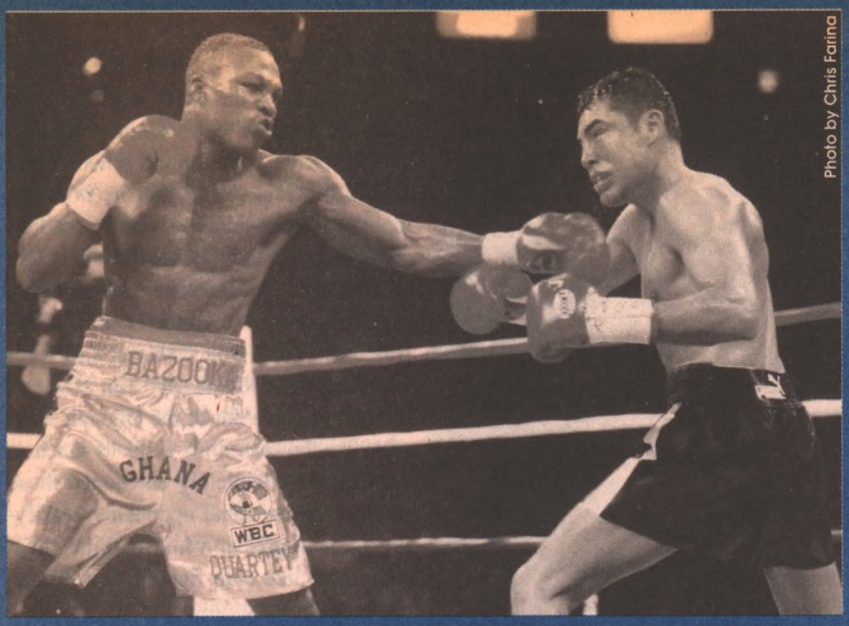


Photo by Chris Farina

In his last start, 14 months ago, Quartey came close to toppling Oscar De La Hoya from the welterweight throne. But as has been in wont in several other fights, "Bazooka" faded down the stretch and allowed De La Hoya to save the title with a big rally in the final round.

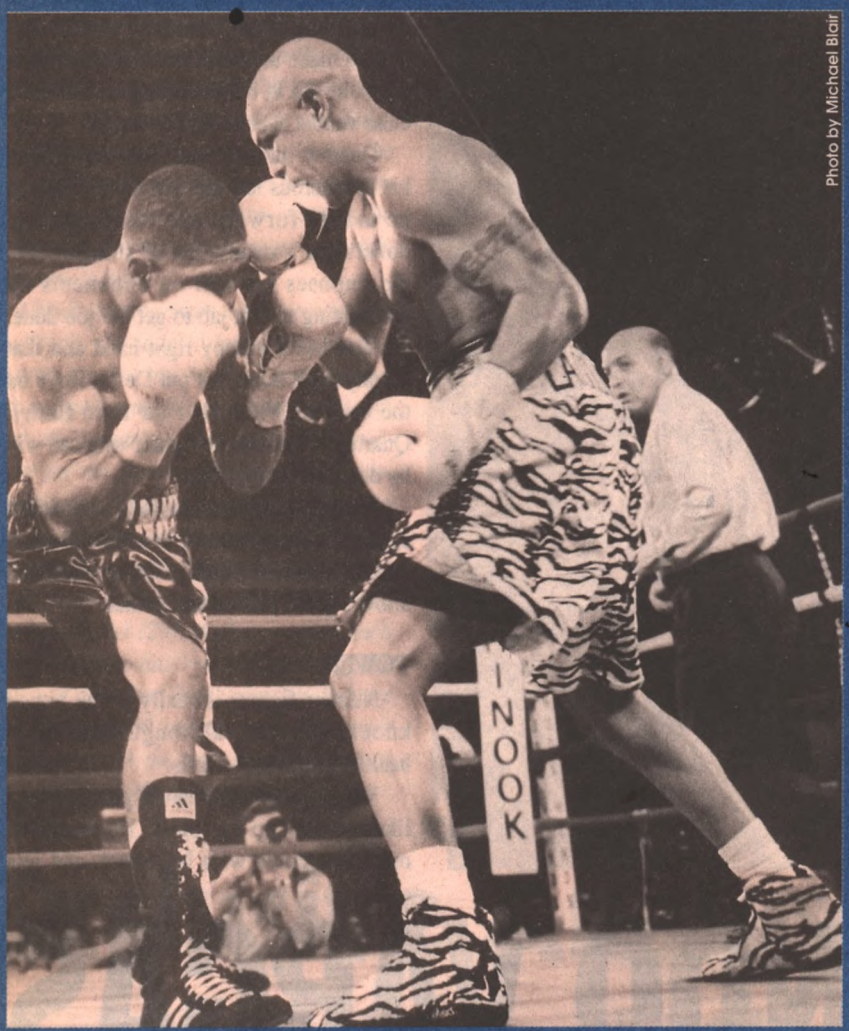


Photo by Michael Blair

Vargas had all sorts of trouble against clever veteran Winky Wright before coming on strong in the late rounds to pull out a controversial points win and keep the IBF 154-pound belt. He'll need a better performance if he's going to beat Quartey.

the knockout come when it may. His best punch is probably the left hook, which he can throw with equal adeptness to the body or head, but he has adequate power in his right hand as well.

As a jab-first fighter, Quartey isn't likely to score quick knockouts, even when he lands his best punch early. He is, however, a dangerous puncher who can turn the momentum with one blow. This usually happens after a certain amount of softening up with his punishing left, but there's enough early-round knockouts on his record that it would be foolish for Vargas to take him for granted at any stage of the fight.

If either fighter has an edge in the power department, it is probably Quartey. But there's not much to choose between them.

DEFENSE

Quartey's defense is his offense. His jab keeps his opponent occupied and on the defensive, and his hands are heavy enough to keep most foes wary. He is able to slip punches, but he generally prefers the discipline of keeping his hands high and his chin tucked in, which allows him to weather flurries or hard single punches. The threat of being caught with a hard counter makes him difficult to hit cleanly. Ask De La Hoya, who had trouble mustering the courage to brave Quartey's offense in order to get off his own punches.

Vargas can make opponents miss by sheer reflex or by using his footwork, which is far superior to Quartey's. He seems to have a knack for making punches miss by fractions of inches. Although his defensive skill hasn't been fully developed yet, he has the balance to stay in the pocket and look for counterpunching opportunities. While he's never faced a jab as menacing as Quartey's, the only time Vargas has really had any trouble with an opponent's jab was against Wright, who, as a southpaw, presented a completely different look from the one Quartey brings. Vargas is usually adept at slipping or blocking the punch, so it will be interesting to see if he can neutralize Quartey's best weapon.

All in all, Vargas is the more complete defensive fighter.

(Continued on page 63)

"LENNOX LEWIS HAS TWO CHOICES: QUIT, OR GET KNOCKED OUT!"

Photo by Frank Vitucci

By Michael Grant

As he sat on the canvas for the first time in his career, trying to clear his head and figure out how the heck he was suddenly three-feet tall instead of 6'7", Michael Grant had two choices. Option number one was to save himself an arduous uphill climb, ease into that indentation he'd made in the floor, and collect his million-dollar payday. Of course, for any real fighter, that's not a viable option at all, so Grant chose what was behind Door Number Two. He pulled himself up, gutted his way through the next nine rounds, and finally kayoed Andrew Golota in the 10th round.

At the time, all that was clear was that Grant, 31-0 (22), had temporarily saved

his career. But a few weeks later, it was revealed that the win over Golota had done much more than that: It had earned him a shot at the undisputed heavyweight championship of the world. You see, titlist Lennox Lewis was seated at ringside for the Grant-Golota bout, and since he had blown Golota out a couple of years earlier in about the time it takes to say "tea and crumpets," he was made plenty confident by the way Grant struggled with "The Foul Pole." So it was announced in early-January that Lewis, 34-1-1 (27), would be making his first defense of the unified title against the undefeated 27-year-old from Norristown, Pennsylvania, on April 29 at New York's Madison Square Garden.

Grant is never one to lack confidence when he steps into the ring, but he's especially self-assured heading into his title shot—surprisingly so to those who interpreted the Golota fight as a warning that he shouldn't fight Lewis just yet, if at all. The highly religious Grant simply can't see himself losing, and he spoke at length with THE RING Managing Editor Eric Raskin in mid-January about what he sees unfolding when he challenges for the sport's ultimate prize.

I know people say that because Andrew Golota dropped me with a right hand, then Lennox Lewis is going to do even worse to me with his right hand. There are going to be a lot of critics out there who are gonna say each and every negative thing about me or every positive thing about Lennox. But keep in mind, he's only Lennox. He's not a machine. He's flesh and blood, just like I am. And as far as I'm concerned, the only thing that he has on me is experience, which doesn't bother me since I've fought experienced guys my entire career. I like fighting guys with more experience than me because it elevates me. That's how I know I'm going to do well—very well—in this fight. Lennox will bring out the best in me.

As a matter of fact, I had a dream that I knocked the guy out. That was before the fight was even on people's minds, but it was on my mind. I had a dream back in '97 that I knocked the guy out. I believe it was in the second round, but I'm not completely sure. But whatever round it was, I don't really see him being around for 12.

I've wanted to fight Lewis ever since that dream. I've been ready to fight Lewis a long time. You know what makes me so confident? I'm a spiritual man. I read my Bible. And I know that the fear of man doesn't exist in my heart. I rise to every occasion that's put in front of me. You put an occasion in front of me, and you think it's too tough for me, then you're gonna be proved wrong. That's just the bottom line.

I want to hear the doubters. All my life, I've been fighting as an underdog, and I had to prove them wrong. As far as my

Grant was dropped twice in the first round of his fight with Andrew Golota (top), but rallied back to win via 10th-round TKO. In that fight, Grant exhibited the heart he feels is one of his main advantages over Lewis.

fighting career, this may be the first time I'm officially an underdog, in terms of the betting. But that's just extra motivation. Everything is motivation for me when I know where I came from. I had nothing, but I amounted to something, so everything is motivation. I'm a hard worker, and I lose myself in my work.

On the night of April 29, my work will be taking the heavyweight title from Lennox Lewis. And honestly, I didn't even look at his second fight with Holyfield. That's how much I thought of the guy. I remember maybe one performance where I think he may have had potential: when he fought Phil Jackson, way back when. Since he fought Phil Jackson, he hasn't impressed me that much at all. I think the guys that he fought, some of them didn't want to fight him. But now, he's facing a guy with the same power as him, that wants the fight, and that's willing to take the fight to him.

People say that Lennox Lewis will outbox me. I don't think so. Lennox Lewis has never been a great boxer, so him trying to outbox me is not even in his repertoire. Regardless, I'm gonna take the fight to him as much as I can, and I know that dealing from my fight history right now, any guy that's gonna bring the fight to me, that's just going to give me enough credibility, enough energy, enough anything and everything to make me fight back.

The battle of the jabs in this fight is going to be very important. I have a four-inch reach advantage on him, and it's crucial that I establish the jab. The jab is going to be out there, and I'm going to keep it popping. And when I follow it with the big right hand, which is equivalent to his right hand, that's going to do some damage. Even if we land right hands at the same time, it doesn't matter; I know I'm getting back up. Will he get back up? We've already seen when he went down what happens when he gets back up. When he lost to Oliver McCall, he went down and he wasn't able to continue. Lennox definitely has a suspect chin. He has a suspect chin, he has a suspect body, and he

(Continued on page 57)

Lewis jabs his way to a decision win in his second fight with Evander Holyfield. Grant knows it's important to win the battle of the jabs, and expects that if he can do that, his potent right hand will start landing as well.

Photo by Jason Ross Lavin

Grant hasn't been impressed by a Lewis performance since the then-undefeated, pre-dreadlocks Brit scored an eighth-round knockout of challenger Phil Jackson in Atlantic City in '94.

ROY JONES' ONE-MAN SHOW

His Radio City Debut Has More Kick Than Punch

Jones joins the Rockettes for a high-kicking number prior to his fight with David Telesco. Unfortunately, the main event wasn't anywhere near as entertaining as the surrounding hoopla.

Photo by Ezra Shaw/Allsport

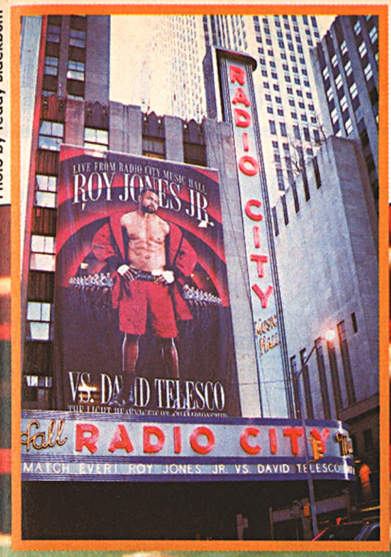
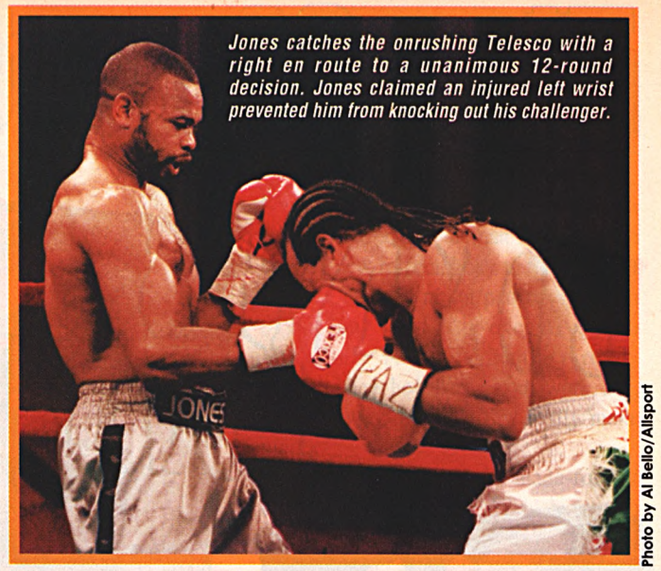


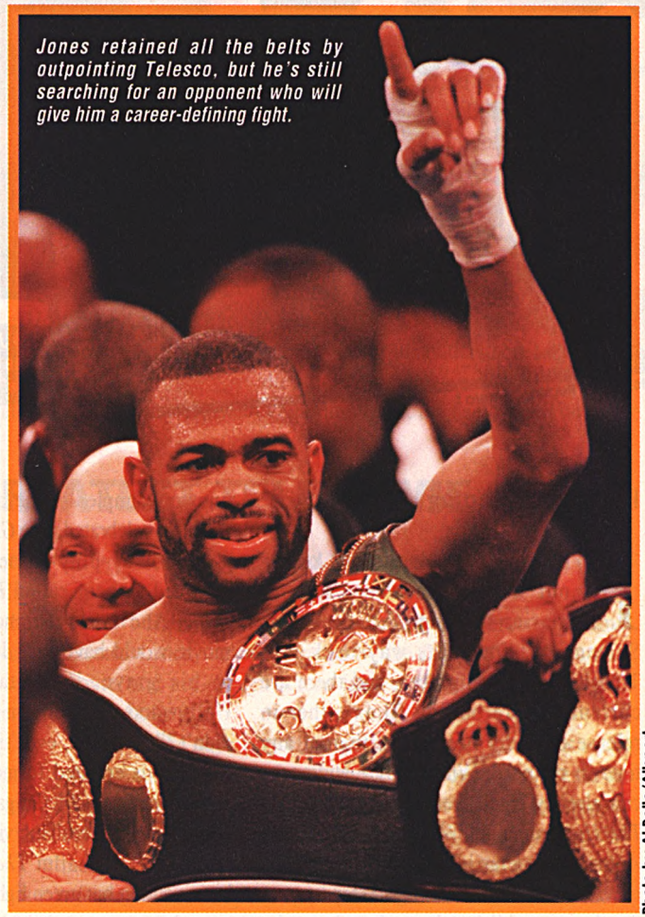
Photo by Teddy Blackburn

Even somebody with an ego the size of Jones' had to be pleased with the huge mural that graced the front of New York's Radio City Music Hall.



Jones catches the onrushing Telesco with a right en route to a unanimous 12-round decision. Jones claimed an injured left wrist prevented him from knocking out his challenger.

Photo by Al Bello/Allsport



Jones retained all the belts by outpointing Telesco, but he's still searching for an opponent who will give him a career-defining fight.

Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

By Nigel Collins

The stage was set, literally, for Roy Jones to light up Manhattan with the brilliance of his art. He was headlining the first-ever fight card at the legendary Radio City Music Hall, in front of HBO's cameras and a sold-out celebrity-packed house. But instead of a virtuoso performance worthy of boxing's pound-for-pound best, Jones gave us another tease—enough to suggest greatness, but not quite enough to confirm it.

This has become Jones' pattern of late, and his fights have developed into more or less a one-man show. The opponent is almost inconsequential, a foil for Jones to torment on his way to another handsome payday. It was, as Telesco suspected, no accident that the challenger was nowhere to be found on the towering mural of Jones and the Rockettes that adorned the front of the renowned theater. Even though this was supposed to be an athletic event, nobody was selling the fight; Jones was the only attraction.

While the absence of competition is unhealthy for any sport, there have always been certain fighters who could, for a spell, carry the game on the strength of their singular genius, even when worthy opposition was scarce. But to make it work, that special fighter has to dominate weak competition the way Joe Louis, Ray Robinson, Marvin Hagler, and Mike Tyson did in their primes. Simply put, that means knockouts. Sure, Muhammad Ali sold some of his lesser fights strictly on the power of his personality, but Jones is not Ali, and neither is anybody else.

What does it say about boxing's pound-

(Continued on page 58)

The Sweet Science On The Silver Screen

BOXING'S HOLLYWOOD COMEBACK

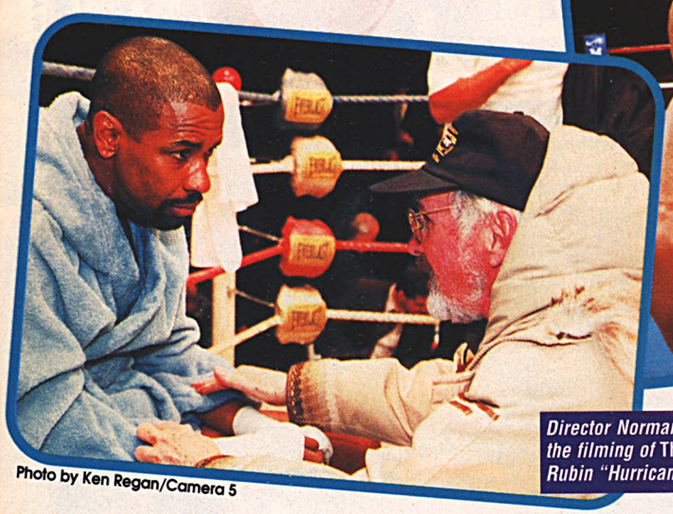
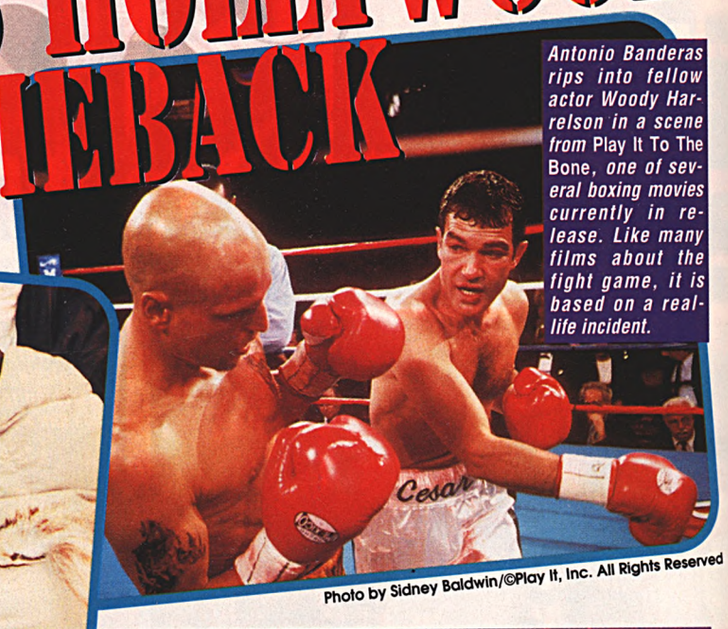


Photo by Ken Regan/Camera 5



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Antonio Banderas rips into fellow actor Woody Harrelson in a scene from Play It To The Bone, *one of several boxing movies currently in release. Like many films about the fight game, it is based on a real-life incident.*

Director Norman Jewison gives Denzel Washington some between-takes advice during the filming of The Hurricane. *Washington's portrayal of former middleweight contender Rubin "Hurricane" Carter has garnered rave reviews.*

By Fiona Manning

Hollywood has gone for the knock-out with the newest craze in movies—boxing. Yep, the Sweet Science has found its way back into Tinseltown's good graces, and there are currently more boxing films either in release or under production than at any time in memory. While movie audiences can already catch Denzel Washington in *The Hurricane* and Woody Harrelson and Antonio Banderas in *Play It To The Bone*, movie executives are racing to step up production on additional movies about the fight game.

Of course, Hollywood has always been enamored with boxers and their dark, colorful stories. *Champion*, *Somebody Up There Likes Me*, *Fat City*, *Requiem For A Heavyweight*, *The Champ*, *The Fix*, and *Body And Soul* are among some of the best-known examples of the category. One of the most celebrated, *The Great White Hope*, a Broadway-play-turned movie, even spawned a spoof called *The Great White Hype*. And while the end results of that movie would have Jack Johnson spinning in his grave, it appears that lately, Hollywood never met a boxing script it didn't like. In fact, ever since actor Daniel Day-Lewis enlisted former featherweight champion Barry McGuigan's help in presenting a gritty, realistic view of a fighter's life in the 1997 film *The Boxer*, there's been nothing but green lights, seemingly, to every boxing story pitched to the studios.

On March 31, former *NYPD Blue* star Jimmy Smits makes a return to the big screen with his Latino boxing movie, *The Price Of Glory*. The movie, which was written by former *New York Times* boxing scribe Phil Berger and shot on the streets of Los Angeles, also features former Golden Gloves boxer John Seda. Smits' character, Arturo Ortega, is a ring contender whose career is unexpectedly cut short. Years later, he is determined to realize his own ambitions through his three young sons. Sound familiar?

Practically every conceivable angle is being utilized in a quest to capitalize on the trend: For purists, there is a new feature in development based on last year's critically acclaimed, hard-hitting documentary *On The Ropes*. For those who like a few giggles slipped between the punches, there's *Vampire Lesbian Kickboxers*, currently in production. But what rekindled Hollywood's latest love affair with boxing?

"Actors love to play boxers, and believe it or not, quite often boxing movies originate with them. Just look at the *Rocky* movies," said Hollywood publicist Michael Russell, who in '92 worked on the movie *Far And Away*. "It was Tom Cruise's idea for his character to be a fighter in that movie. I think he started a new craze."

Others, including industry analyst James Ulmer, credit Robert DeNiro's Academy Award-winning performance in *Raging Bull* as being the main influence for actors' athlete of choice. "They all want to win Oscars," said the creator of the *Ulmer Scale*, the Hollywood bible that rates actors for their marketability and bankability.

The Oscar-winning documentary *When We Were Kings*, about Muhammad Ali's fight with George Foreman in Zaire, also brought new respectability to the genre. "I watched it, and I'm not particularly a fan of boxing," said film executive Lisa Moiselle. "That documentary really brought home how hard boxers work, and, like many actors, how few really make money."

Ali is the subject of a made-for-TV movie *King Of The World*, which aired on ABC in January and will be shown again this summer. In 1999, two Ali movies jumped into production at the same time, but only ABC's was left standing at the final bell. The other, to be produced by its star Will Smith, was still in development at press time. Directed by John Sacret Young of *China Beach* fame, *King Of The World* features *The Practice* star Steve Harris as Sonny Liston and Terrence Dashon Howard as Ali.

Liston is the subject of his own bio-pic, *Night Train*, starring Ving Rhames as the menacing but misunderstood Liston, who died under strange circumstances in Las Vegas in 1970 at the age of 38. The movie

In Price Of Glory, *Jimmy Smits plays an ex-fighter who attempts to realize his unfulfilled dream of being a world champion through his sons, one of whom is played by Ernesto Hernandez (left).*

Photo by Rico Torres/New Line Cinema

NOT QUITE THE GREATEST TELEMOVIE

ABC's *King Of The World*, loosely based on David Remnick's critically acclaimed book of the same name, has little to elevate it above the run-of-the-mill TV movie of the week. It begins during Muhammad Ali's amateur days and culminates with his winning of the heavyweight crown from Sonny Liston in 1964. For those conversant with the broad details of the Ali legend, there's nothing new here. And for viewers unfamiliar with the tale, there is bound to be some confusion as to which real-life characters some of the actors are portraying, as you have to listen very closely to the dialogue to catch their names.

Terrence Dashon Howard is reasonably effective as Ali, but not only is he nowhere near as pretty as "The Greatest," he certainly doesn't look in the sort of peak physical condition required to go six tough rounds with Liston. Howard also lacks the mischievous twinkle in his eye when bragging or reciting poetry that made most, though certainly not all, of Ali's hyperbole more fun than malice. Howard sounds more like a scared kid whistling past the graveyard, but at least he resisted the temptation of indulging in an Ali impersonation, which would have surely turned the film into a farce.

Steve Harris does a better job recreating the brooding, complicated Liston, but is restricted by the fact that this is an Ali movie, and not enough screen time is afforded him to do full justice to the role.

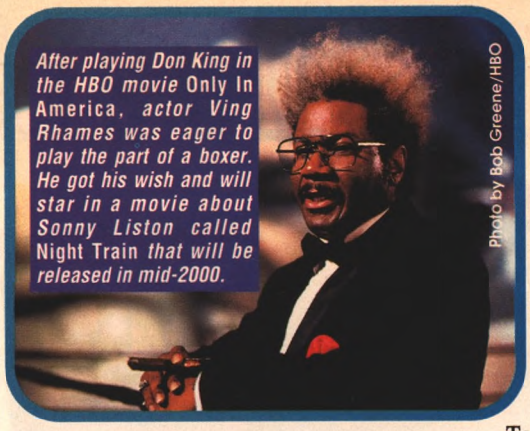
The movie pays very close attention to surface details such as trunks, robes, and haircuts, and it's obvious that whoever is responsible for such particulars spent a lot of time looking at old photographs and fight films. But when it comes to the climactic fight scene between Ali and Liston, we see Howard winging wide looping hooks more in the manner of Jack Dempsey than anything Ali ever threw.

The strength of Remnick's book is that it placed Ali's story within the larger confines of the social upheaval that defined the '60s. The movie makes a brave attempt to do likewise, but ultimately lacks the depth to do full justice to the theme. I give it three thumbless gloves up out of a possible five.

—Nigel Collins

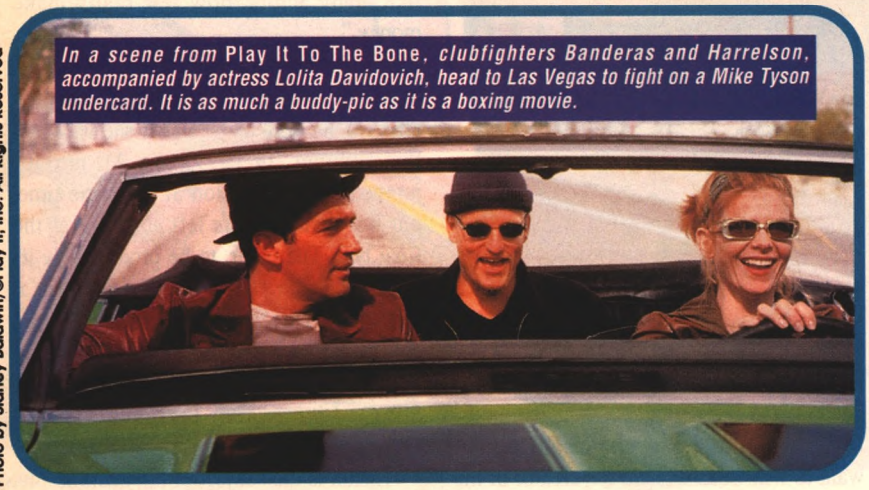
is due for release in mid-2000. Rhames threw himself into his role of Liston, attending every boxing match he could. "Loved it, loved it," said Rhames. "I wanted to play a boxer after portraying Don King in *Only In America*."

Liston is a natural for Hollywood scrutiny. Consider the bare-bone facts of his untimely death: Found dead by his wife of an apparent heroin overdose, those closest to him say it was impossible that Liston could have been shooting up because he had a life-long fear of needles.



After playing Don King in the HBO movie Only In America, *actor Ving Rhames was eager to play the part of a boxer. He got his wish and will star in a movie about Sonny Liston called* Night Train *that will be released in mid-2000.*

Photo by Bob Greene/HBO



In a scene from Play It To The Bone, *clubfighters Banderas and Harrelson, accompanied by actress Lolita Davidovich, head to Las Vegas to fight on a Mike Tyson undercard. It is as much a buddy-pic as it is a boxing movie.*

Photo by Sidney Baldwin/©Play It, Inc. All Rights Reserved

"I can tell you why actors love boxers and boxers are drawn to acting. It's about getting that big break," said actor Michael Cavalieri, who got his in the movie *The Next Karate Kid*. "Actors and athletes suffer the same injuries—only theirs are visible. I work out at Gold's Gym in North Hollywood. Tons of boxers come in there. There's a camaraderie working out next to each other. I've seen James Toney, Gabe Ruelas ... they've been at it for years. For an actor, it's pretty inspiring."

It's just not the boxers themselves who are the subject of the spate of fight pictures. Their managers, too, are starting to share the spotlight. *The Jackie Kallen Story*, in development by The Cort Madden Company at Paramount Pictures, was initially handled by producer Keri Selig.

"I'd never heard of Jackie Kallen," Selig confessed. "And when she came in, she was talking all about her fighter James Toney. I'd never even heard of him. But it

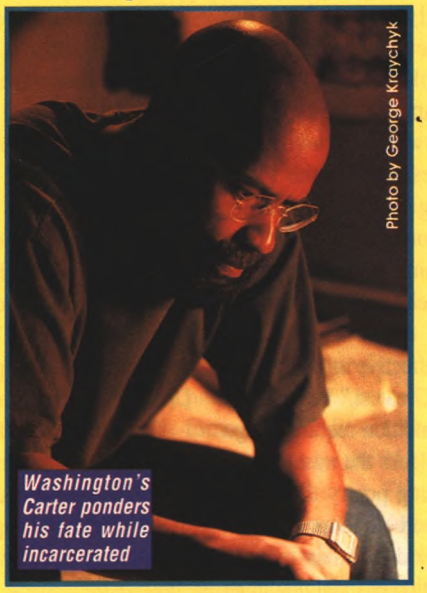
(Continued on page 59)

DANDY 'CANE

If you're going to see *The Hurricane* as a boxing fan, looking for a great boxing movie, you're going to be disappointed. The feature film starring Denzel Washington as wrongly jailed 1960s middleweight contender Rubin "Hurricane" Carter is not really about the Sweet Science, and the few fight scenes in the picture are somewhat lacking—not in their cinematography, but in their accuracy.

Though beautifully shot in black-and-white, with camera work that often zooms in to the point that all you see is a picturesque mess of gloves and flesh, the fight scenes play like utter propaganda. In his knockouts of Emile Griffith and Joey Cooper, Carter is made to look like the most perfect fighting machine since Ivan Drago. And in his unanimous decision loss to Joey Giardello for the middleweight title, a verdict that was hardly disputed at all in reality, the decision is depicted as a Eugenia Williams special, with a hint of racial bias to spice things up.

But *The Hurricane* is not really a boxing movie; it's an alternately heartbreaking and heartwarming story about racial prejudice, justice, perseverance, desperation, and hope. And while it falls short as a boxing film, it excels as a gripping character study. Director Norman Jewison deserves credit for effectively mixing and matching parts of the story out of chronological order in a non-confusing manner, as well as for balancing Carter's horrific tale with the uplifting story of Lesra Martin (played by likable Vicellous Shannon), the teenager who befriends the jailed Hurricane and helps him see his bogus triple-murder sentence overturned.



Washington's Carter ponders his fate while incarcerated

Photo by George Kraychyk

But the real key is Washington, whose performance is as moving and convincing as any in recent memory. He received a Golden Globe for Best Dramatic Actor (the movie was also nominated for Best Dramatic Picture), and, though the Oscar nominations hadn't been announced as of press time, Washington is sure to be on that ballot as well. And if anyone else takes home the little gold statuette, it would be almost as much of an atrocity as the real Carter's conviction.

—Eric Raskin

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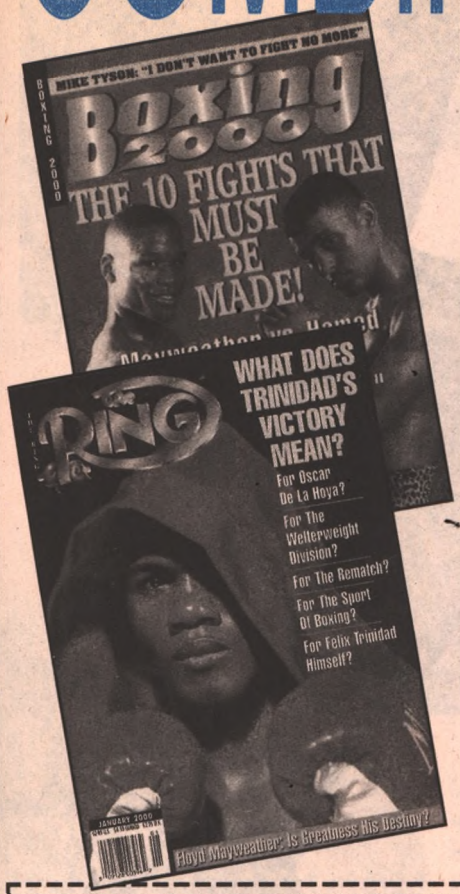

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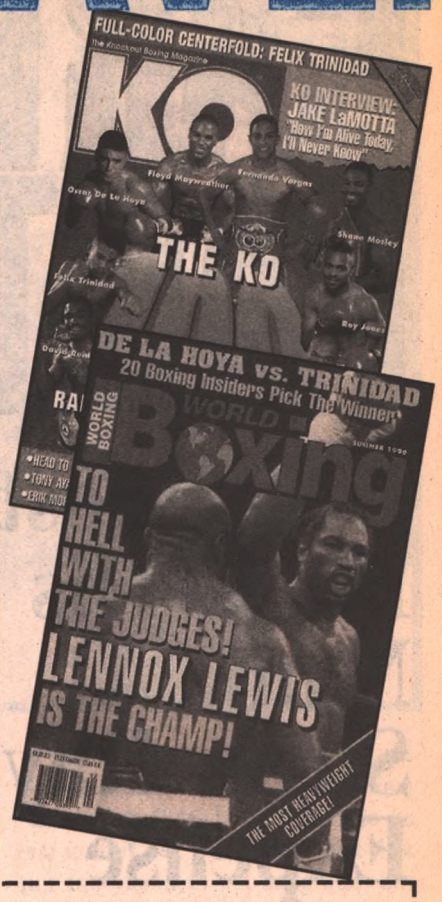

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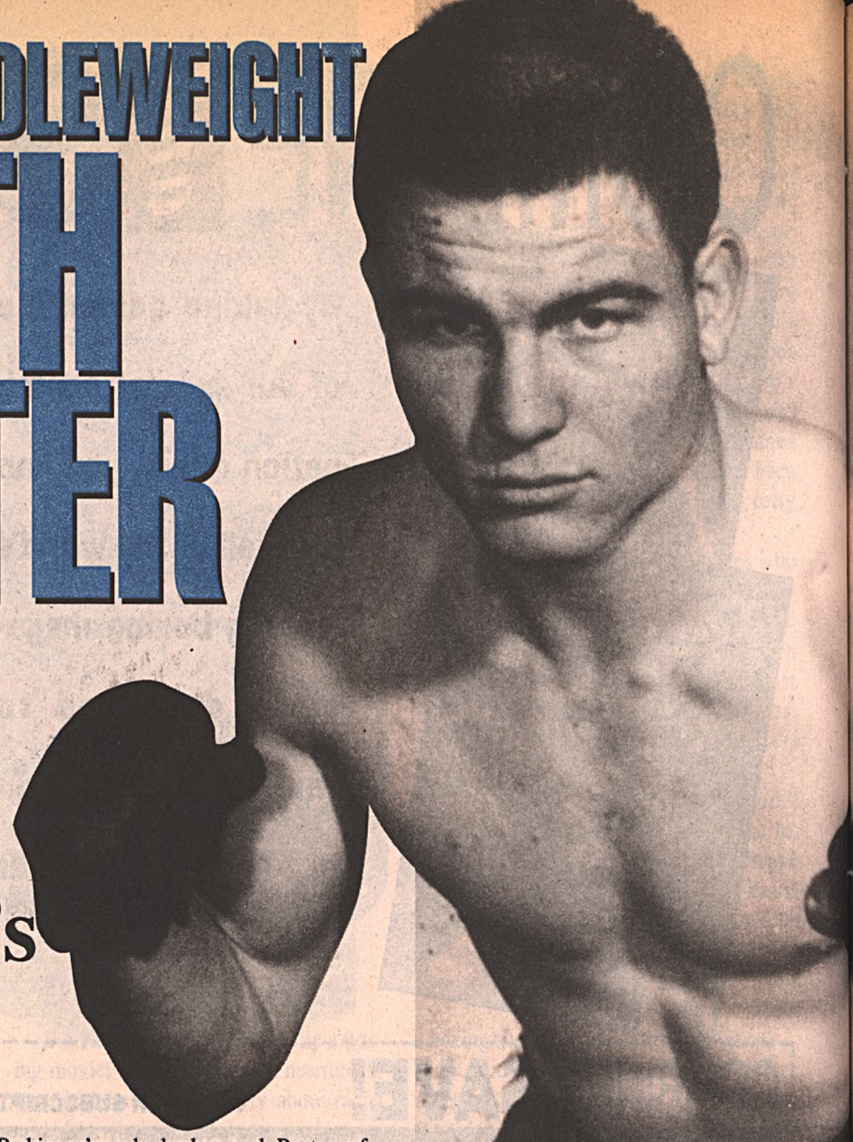
1950s MIDDLEWEIGHT GARTH PANTER

He Almost Made His Name At Sugar Ray's Expense



By Pete Ehrmann

He'll be 70 this July, and the Parkinson's syndrome he has in common with Muhammad Ali makes Garth Panter unsteady on his feet and, in his words, "sound like an old drunk." But every Monday and Friday, and sometimes more often, Panter can be found at the bowling alley near his trailer home in Kaylesville, Utah, about 15 miles north of Salt Lake City.

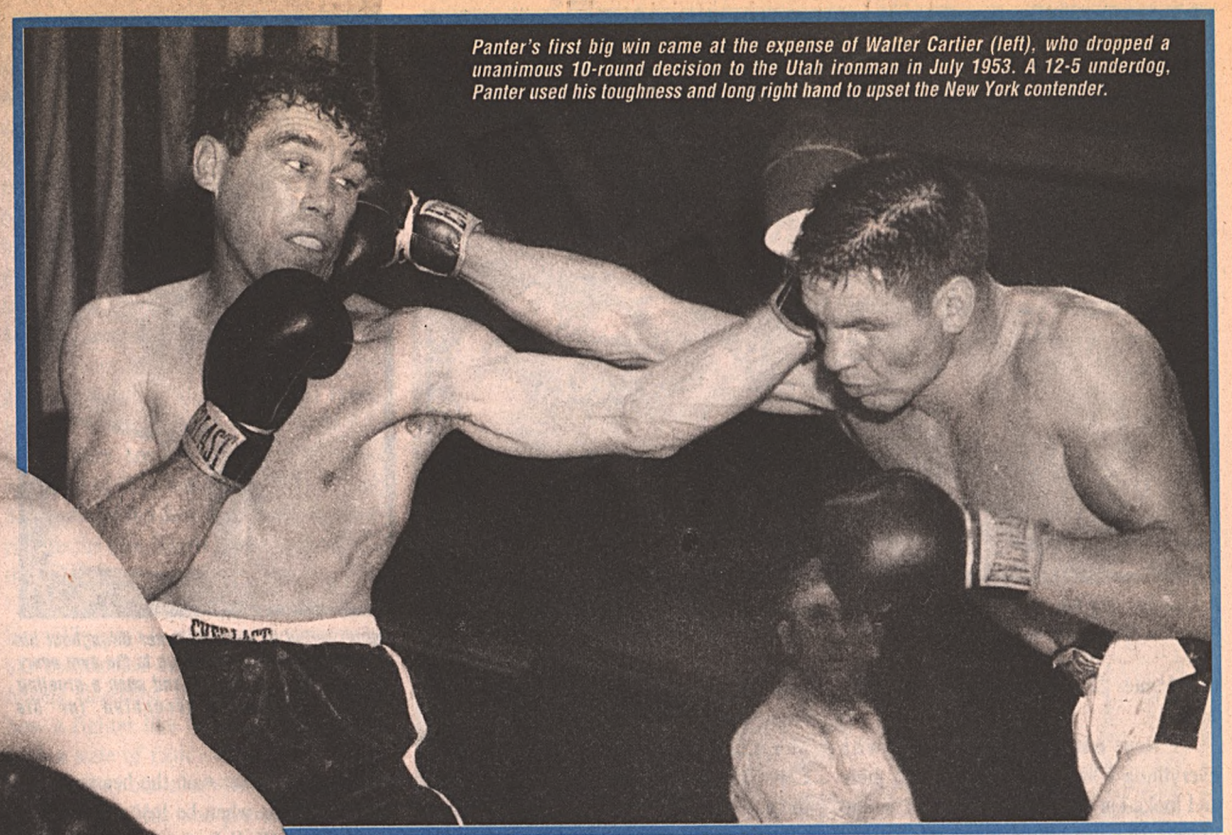
How's his game?

"Up and down," said Panter, which distinguishes his kegling from a ring career in which the man whose name was invariably preceded by the word "rugged" in newspaper accounts of his bouts against the best middleweights of the 1950s was renowned for his ability to stay up. Nobody bowled him over inside the ring, and not even his Parkinson's and a broken neck Panter suffered in a car crash about 12 years ago have done it outside.

"Well, I'm just tough," said the ironman who was a full-time ironworker the whole time he was swapping punches to support his family.

He apparently came by it genetically. Panter's dad, Ken, fought as a light heavyweight in the '20s, and his uncle, Forest "Kid" Barger, had about 125 pro bouts in the '30s and was a ranked middleweight before retiring at 25. Former heavyweight champion Jack Dempsey was Barger's manager.

Uncle Forest once recalled a fight against a Jack Sharkey protege named Mickey Bishop, whom he was beating handily until his jaw was broken by a punch in the third round. With just an orange peel in his mouth for support, Barger went the full 10.



Panter's first big win came at the expense of Walter Cartier (left), who dropped a unanimous 10-round decision to the Utah ironman in July 1953. A 12-5 underdog, Panter used his toughness and long right hand to upset the New York contender.

Growing up on a farm in Preston, Idaho, Garth and his older brother Dale, who was a decent main-event heavyweight in the Pacific Northwest at the same time Garth was fighting, did their share of tussling. At West High School in nearby Dayton, Garth was a standout in football, basketball, and especially boxing, which was a popular secondary school sport then. As a senior, he won the welterweight title.

Panter joined the Army in 1948, but his dad took sick, and Panter was cut loose to return home and help out on the family farm. It wasn't the career he was hoping for, and Panter was not a happy farmer. Uncle Forest was there, too, and he told his nephew, "You like to fight. Why don't you move to Salt Lake City and try it?" He did, and on December 6, 1949, Panter knocked out Sam Healy in three rounds to launch a 16-fight winning streak, 11 via knockout. The streak ended when he lost a 10-round decision to Jimmy Welch.

Panter's style was as spare and straightforward as the Utah dessert. "I was no fancy dan," said Panter. "I more or less shuffled in slow with my left jab out. I had a powerful left jab, and a pretty good right that came after it."

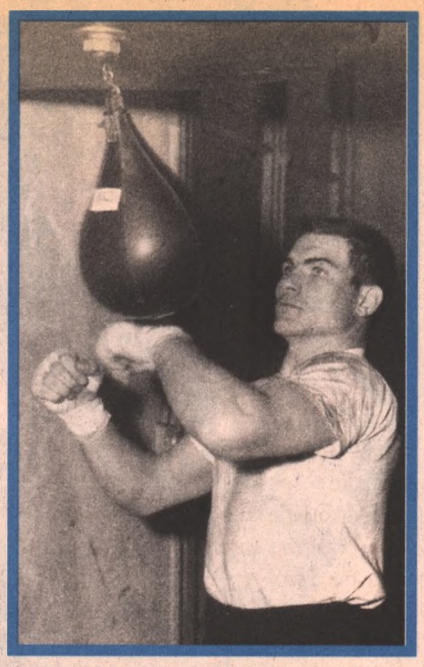
What he had, too, was a chin that was as hard as the thousands of pounds of iron Panter hefted all day before heading to the gym to work out. Boxers might out-slick him and punchers out-bang him, but nobody could dent him or put him on the canvas for good.

In 1951, another Utah middleweight with virtually identical ring DNA knocked out the first 11 opponents he faced. Gene Fullmer "was out to kill 'em and murder 'em, no ifs, ands, or buts," said Marv Jensen, the manager who guided the in-your-face Fullmer to two tours as middleweight champion in the 1950s and '60s.

"For the first four rounds, he had me more or less bewildered by coming in like a mad Indian," recalled Panter of his September '51 match with Fullmer in Salt Lake City. "But from the fourth through the 10th, I had him almost knocked out in every round, and he won the decision. I always figured I won hands-down, but remember, Marv Jensen controlled boxing in Utah."

Not surprisingly, Fullmer remembered it a little bit differently when asked about the fight a few years ago. But he recalled the futility of trying to make the indestruc-

Panter rips into Frenchman Pierre Langlois en route to a 10-round decision at Madison Square Garden. Panter, a late substitute, earned a top-10 rating with his upset victory.



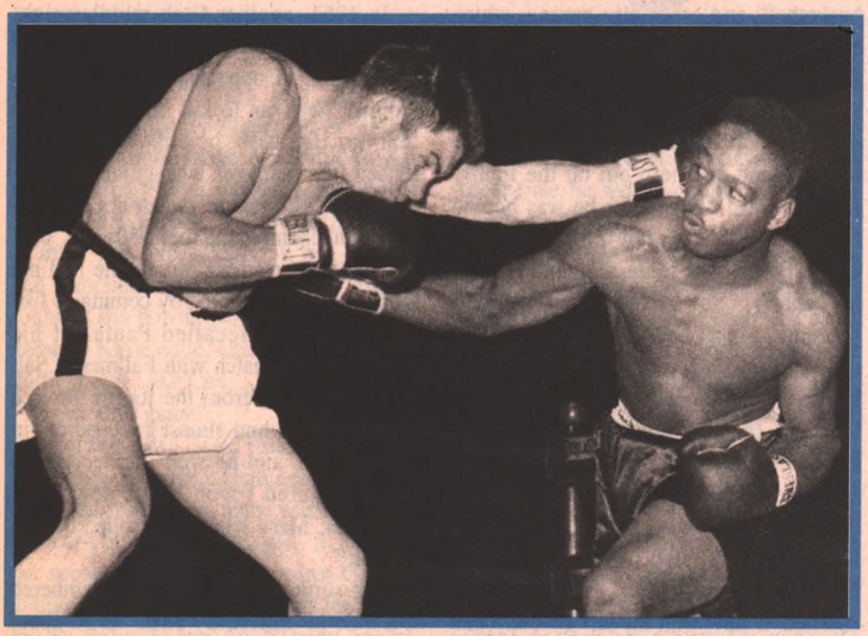
Panter toiled as an ironworker throughout his pro career, but would still go to the gym every day after work. Genetics and such a grueling schedule probably accounted for his unyielding endurance.

tible Panter his 12th consecutive kayo victim.

"I went out there and hit him with everything I had, and he just stood there and looked at me," said Fullmer. "I said to myself, 'No use hitting him hard. I'll just hit him often.'"

The 5'10½" Panter, who resembled a young Dempsey (in fact, in the '50s when Hollywood was looking for someone to play "The Manassa Mauler" in a planned biopic that was ultimately abandoned, Panter was contacted about the role) was popular throughout the West and Northwest. His March '53 match in Butte, Montana, with future 160-pound champion Carl "Bobo" Olson, drew the biggest gate in the state since the Dempsey-Tommy Gibbons heavyweight title fight in Shelby 30 years before.

Panter lost a decision, but in his next fight a month later, he made a breakthrough in his first appearance in the East, even though he was on the short end of the vote in that one, too. According to the July '53 issue of THE RING, the "bull-shouldered young farmer won the hearts of the New York fans when he lost a split decision to Tuzo 'Kid' Portuguez, the Central American middleweight champion, in a thrilling bout at the Eastern Parkway Arena. Making his first appearance in the big time, Panter won approval with his two-fisted punching and aggressive tactics."



Panter was in top form again when he tackled Boston's Norman Hayes. Despite the fact that Hayes had beaten Jake LaMotta and Paul Pender, he couldn't get past Panter, who won a unanimous decision.

Portuguez, whose very first recorded bout in 1946 was a 10-rounder, was another ironman, but a Panter right appeared to have knocked him down in the final round. Referee Ray Miller, however, called it a slip and thus deprived Panter of a win in his first televised outing.

After dropping another close verdict to Lee Sala, Panter punched contender Walter Cartier all over the Eastern Parkway ring to score a big upset win in July '53. Cartier subsequently avenged the loss by decisioning Panter in a rematch, but on October 23, Panter stung fast-track contender Pierre Langlois at Madison Square Garden. The 10th-ranked Frenchman was a strong favorite to get past Panter, a late substitute, in the same ring where, three days earlier, Olson had beaten Randy Turpin for the vacant middleweight title, and qualify for his own chance at the championship.

A rigorous bodypuncher, Langlois was beaten at his own specialty by Panter, who

tattooed the Frenchman's left side and stunned him with sharp blows to the head. At the end of what the *New York Times* called a "hard fought bout," the votes of two of the three officials gave "the free trading puncher" from Utah his 51st win in 64 fights. Not only did the upset victory land Panter in the top 10, but according to published reports, he also broke through the iron curtain that boxing's power brokers had dropped in front of him.

"It occurred to us that not even the astute moguls of the dictatorial International Boxing Club could control fate when they tossed Panter into what appeared to be a lion's den," wrote Dick Schroeder of the *Salt Lake Tribune*, referring to the Jim Norris mob-tainted outfit that virtually ran the sport in the '50s. "Despite the fact that Panter has expressed his willingness to meet any opponent, he has been meted out a lot of inequities by boxing chieftains. It's difficult to imagine how a fighter like Panter could get into such a state of fistic oblivion before battling his way out of it with an upset victory. A study of his case proves that during these years Garth has been practically entombed by boxing's passing scene."

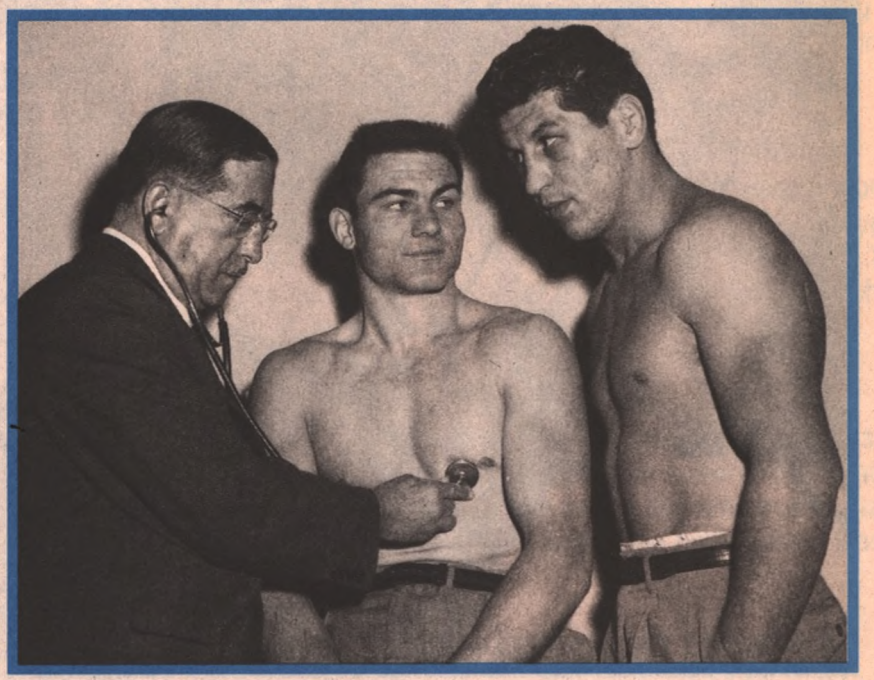
Panter's Lazarus-like rise continued in his next two fights. After knocking out Grover Jackson in Salt Lake City, the never-rusty ironman once again stepped into the ring at the last minute, substituting for Ernie "The Rock" Durando against Norman Hayes, who'd beaten former champion Jake LaMotta and future titlist Paul Pender. Panter won a decision at the Olympia Stadium in Detroit.

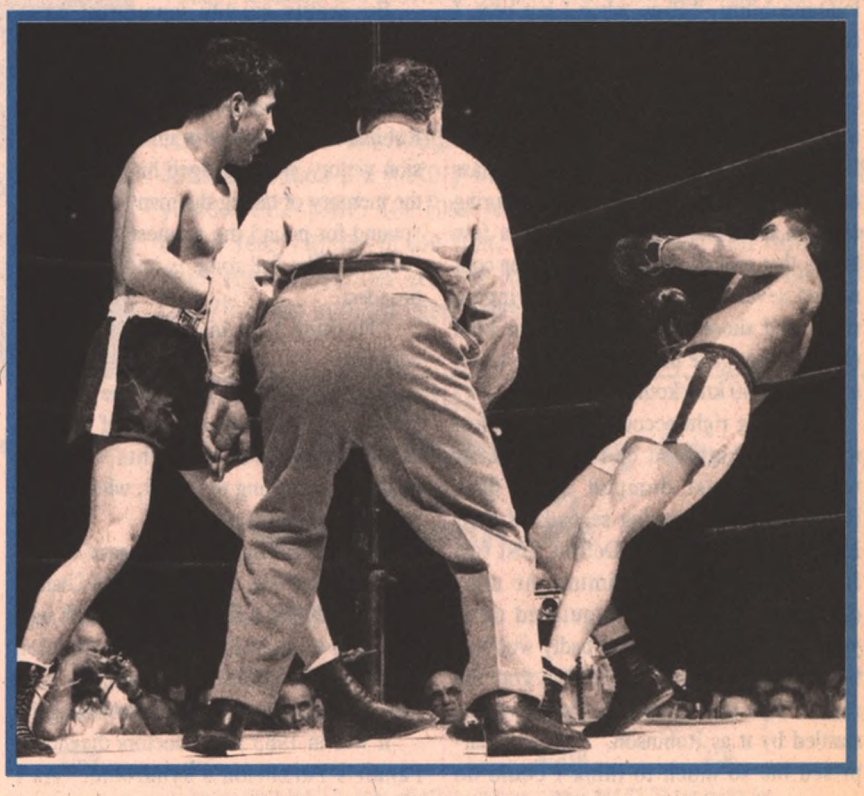
As 1964 dawned, Joey Giardello was the top-ranked contender at 160 pounds, and he showed why against Panter at the Garden on January 8. Except when he forced the future champion to hold briefly in the fourth round, Panter was never in the fight. It ended in the fifth, when the referee intervened after Giardello landed a series of right hands to the head.

"He was a good puncher," Panter recalled. "He hit me and jarred me up a little bit, and the referee stopped it. Of course, it was no disgrace."

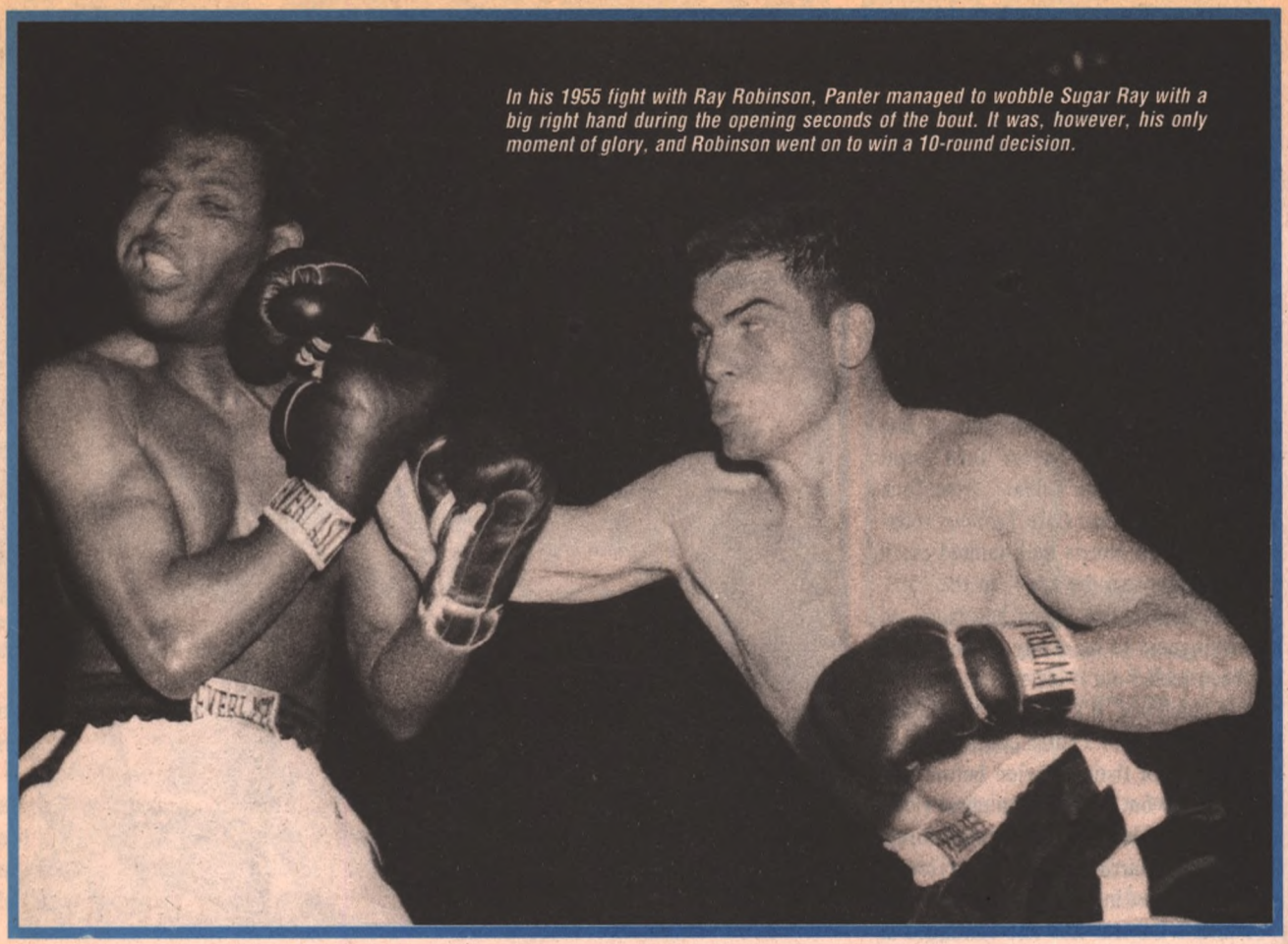
It was the first time in 66 recorded fights that Panter failed to go the distance. But his record of never having been off his feet was still intact, and remained so until he went to Johannesburg to fight South African middleweight champion Mike Holt in March '56. According to the Associated Press report of the fight, Panter touched down twice in the ninth round of a hectic 12-round bout won by Holt on a decision.

Panter doesn't recall being knocked down, but he does remember that the boxing gloves used in the Holt fight had "thumbs that stuck straight out, and by the second round, I had both my thumbs out of joint. I had a helluva time." Besides, said the man who also lost a decision to French champion Charles Humez in Paris in '54, "you can't win a fight in them other countries."





Dr. Vincent Nardiello checks Panter's heart as Joey Giardello looks on (above). Future Hall of Famer Giardello was the number-one middleweight contender at the time, and stopped Panter (below) with a series of right hands in the fifth round.



In his 1955 fight with Ray Robinson, Panter managed to wobble Sugar Ray with a big right hand during the opening seconds of the bout. It was, however, his only moment of glory, and Robinson went on to win a 10-round decision.

After Giardello, Panter lost as much as he won, but his crowd-pleasing style and indominability—"Even when I got beat, I really didn't get hurt"—kept him in demand. In a non-title bout with champion Olson in '54 that Panter lost on account of a bad cut, the AP reported that "while Panter was obviously not in the same class as Olson, he wasn't afraid. He kept boring right in from the start and landed a few blows that rocked Olson a bit. Panter connected several times with long-swinging rights and shook the champion—the kind of blows that gave the Salt Lake City boxer a record of 40 knockouts in 57 wins."

That long right accounted for the most memorable highlight of Panter's career when it almost dumped Sugar Ray Robinson in the opening seconds of their May 4, 1955, match in Detroit. Just two fights away from reclaiming the middleweight title he'd relinquished three years earlier, Robinson was badly wobbled by a right to the head and had to grab the middle rope to stay upright. Panter was as startled by it as Robinson. "I guess it surprised me so much to think I could do that," he said. "I was so thankful that I'd done it, I was happy."

But reality quickly soured the mood. After that, "I remember I couldn't even get close enough to do any damage," Panter recalled. "He was such a great boxer." But Robinson, who posted a unanimous decision victory, never budged him either, and the memory of taking the man he considers "pound-for-pound the greatest fighter that ever was" the full route is one of Panter's proudest.

"To think," he said, "that I went 10 with him ..."

The record book says that he finished boxing in 1956 with a record of 62-25-1 (45), but many of his fights were not recorded, according to Panter, who says he "stopped counting after 100."

Over the ensuing years, he gave exhibitions and boxed in smokers around Utah to raise money for a state program that supplied guide dogs for the blind. Sheldon Panter, one of Garth's six children, was born with glaucoma and eventually lost his sight.

It was in 1985 when doctors diagnosed Panter's Parkinson's syndrome. "As I understand it," he said, "it's different from Parkinson's disease, which gets worse in stages until it kills you. They say that Parkinson's syndrome don't do that. I don't know, but I guess I'll find out someday."

Three years after the onset of his condition, Panter was in the car accident that broke his neck. "I was about dead, I guess," he said. But, as usual, his toughness prevailed.

As in the case of Ali, the world's most famous victim of Parkinson's syndrome, it's likely the punches he took caused his condition. But the Utah ironman would do it again today. Especially today.

"I don't have cable-TV, but from what I hear of 'em, they're nothing like we used to be," said Panter, referring to the current crop of leather pushers.

It's a common old-timer's complaint, of course, but in this case, the record, like the man who made it, stands on its own two feet. ■

Pete Ehrmann is a freelance writer based in West Allis, Wisconsin, and a regular contributor to this magazine.

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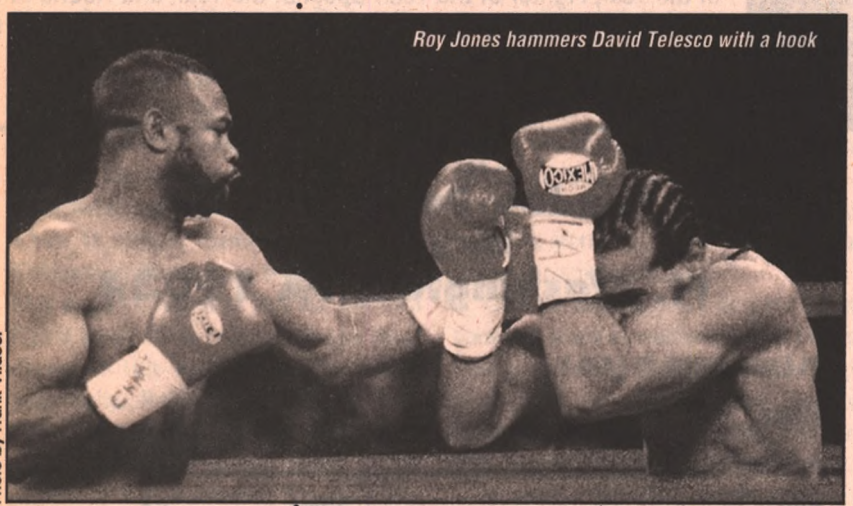
SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS
David Izon KO 9 Derrick Jefferson
Chris Byrd KO 10 Daniel Washington
James Toney W 10 Terry McGroom
Frans Botha KO 1 Steve Pannell
Lawrence Clay-Bey W 10 Robert Daniels
Brian Nielsen KO 8 Troy Weida
Frankie Swindell D 10 Ross Puritty
Alexander Zolkin D 10 Eliecer Castillo
David Bostice W 10 Mike Sedillo
Nicolay Valouev KO 1 Alexei Varakin
Jacklord Jacobs KO 2 Pele Reid
Ray Austin KO 4 Ronnie Smith
Robert Davis KO 2 Wesley Martin
Russell Chasteen KO 2 Rocky Phillips
Ron Guerrero KO 2 Ryan Brieske

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Ian Koulkov KO 2 Dirk Wallyn
Michael Rush KO 7 Pedro Riveron
Billy Lewis W 10 Leslie Stewart
Scott Lopeck KO 3 Brian Davis
Cleveland Nelson W 6 Vinson Durham

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Roy Jones W 12 David Telesco
(Retains Unified Title)



Roy Jones hammers David Telesco with a hook

Photo By Hank Vitucci

Greg Wright W 12 Darrell Spinks
Ole Klemetsen KO 8 Sugarboy Malinga
Jose Luis Rivera W 8 Kady King
Guy Waters KO 3 Simon Whui
Roberto Dominguez W 12 Aaron Soria
Ismael Rasheed KO 3 Doug Moore

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Howard Eastman KO 2 Ojay Abrahams
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Wate Singwangcha W 10 Edwin Gastador
Roongsurin Lookklongchan W 10 Francis Velasquez

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James Armah KO 7 Geoffrey Munica
Junichi Watanabe KO 1 Joel Junio
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Setsuo Segawa W 10 Shigeru Nakazato
Israel Vazquez W 8 Edel Ruiz

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Jose Laureano W 12 Miguel Del Valle
Kohki Tanaka Tech. Win 7 Lolito Laroa

STRAWWEIGHTS
Chana Porpaoin Tech. Draw 1
Gerry Rosales

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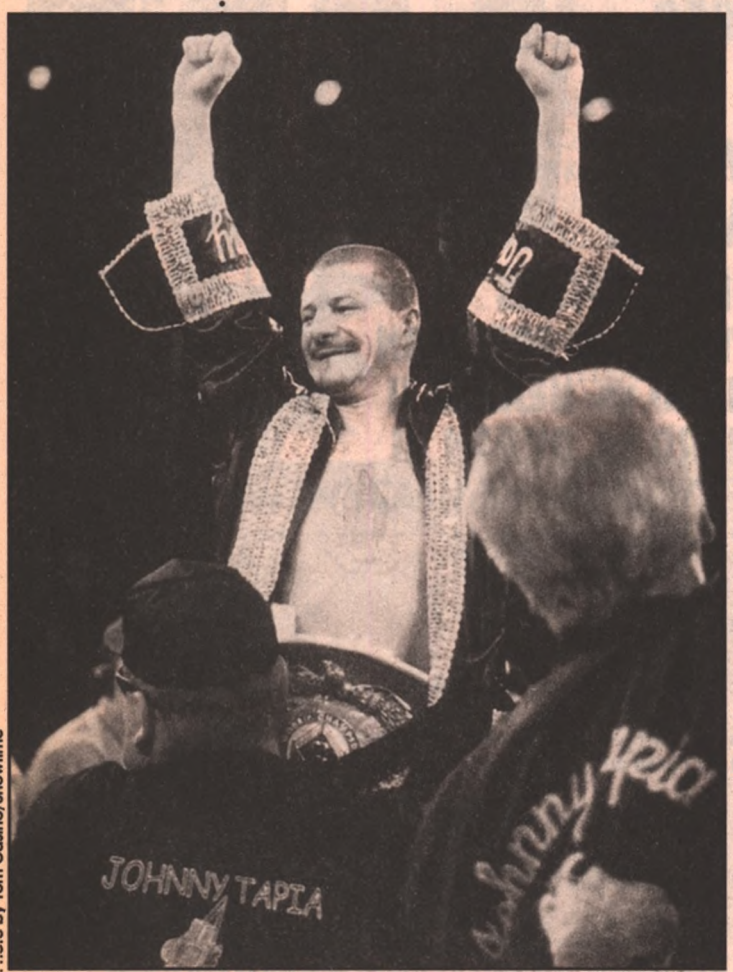
RINGSIDE REPORTS

FIGHTER *of the* MONTH

In a career that will surely be remembered for its many peaks, Tapia has not been without his valleys. Long before he became a two-division world champion, Tapia's first pro bout ended in a disappointing draw. He didn't fight for 3½ years in the early-'90s as he had to persevere through drug problems and incarcerations. Even when he was at the top of his game over the past few years, he was often criticized for turning in boring, overly defensive performances. But it wasn't until last June that Tapia finally suffered his first pro loss, and as he entered the ring to battle well-regarded Jorge Eliecer Julio in January, not everyone was sure the fiery warrior from Albuquerque would be able to climb out of this valley.

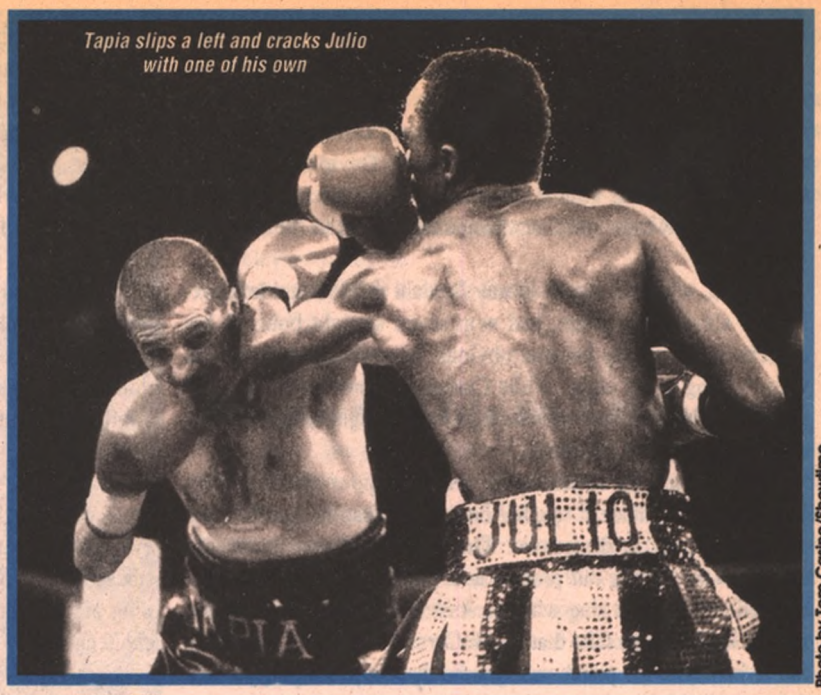


But by the time a few rounds were in the books, it was obvious that Tapia was boxing as beautifully as he ever had before. He was as close to perfect as he was on the night he trounced Danny Romero 2½ years earlier, making Julio miss, darting in and out, banging the body with precision, and rattling off combinations with astonishing speed, especially for a 32-year-old fighter. The only thing Tapia did all night that fell short of flawlessness was his trademark backflip at the final bell, but, hey, he's only human. You just wouldn't know it by the clinic he put Julio through.

• • • •

Johnny Tapia

Johnny Tapia W 12 Jorge Eliecer Julio



Tapia slips a left and cracks Julio with one of his own

Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime

Albuquerque, New Mexico: Many veteran observers hailed this as Tapia's finest hometown performance. Considering the explosive history with which he's deservedly built a dedicated, frenzied fan base, that's really saying something.

This was Julio's second venture into the fistic stratosphere against a big-name opponent. The other was a loss of the WBA title to Junior Jones in 1993, Julio's only previous setback on a slate that now reads 42-2 (31). The '88 Olympic bronze medalist from Colombia proved against Tapia that he belongs with the best, but in the end, he just couldn't match the two-division former world champion's speed and skill. Each man weighed in at 117¾ for a well-finessed but occasionally dirty brawl that saw referee Mike Ortega (USA) deduct a point from Julio in the seventh due to repeated elbowing.

Initially, it appeared Tapia, 32, would dance and pick his opponent apart with enough flurries to coast to a wide victory. But by the fourth frame, a determined Julio, 30, had thumped home enough big rights to rouse Tapia into a toe-to-toe firefight. They exchanged precision wallops throughout the middle sessions, and even though the screaming swarm of 11,153 (a gate record for New Mexico) loved every second of it, Tapia's trainer, Freddie Roach, snapped his frantic charge back into a more prudent mode down the stretch.

Tapia got back up on his toes, and by the 10th, he was well in control and started playing to the adoring legions that packed The Pit, which serves as University of New Mexico's basketball arena when Tapia isn't the star attraction.

There was another bristling exchange in the 11th, but Tapia, 47-1-2 (25), was so far ahead by that point, Julio needed a knockout to win. And while the Colombian never stopped trying, he was a tired and thoroughly beaten man by the end of the bout.

The unanimous decision went to Tapia by margins of 116-111 from Jose Rivera (Puerto Rico), 118-109 by Manuel Maritxalar (Spain), and 119-108 by Levi Morris (USA). THE RING saw it 119-109.

"I was hungry every round and never thought I had it in the bag," said the marked but jubilant victor. "He hit very hard and woke me up a couple of times. After he lost the point, I knew he was going for the knockout, but he couldn't deal with my head movement, and my jab was awesome tonight."

The event spotlighted a reunion between Tapia and former arch-rival Danny Romero, for whom Tapia helped secure a featured spot on the undercard. Team Tapia also took a reported 57 firearms off the streets through an enterprising guns-for-tickets program.

Television: Showtime

Promoter: Frank Warren

(1-8-00)

Phil Woolever

In Joo Cho W 12 Gerry Penalosa

Seoul, South Korea: Unbeaten footworker Cho, 114, South Korea, barely kept the WBC super flyweight throne, as he defeated ex-champ Penalosa, 114¾, by a split decision over 12 dull rounds. Some 1,500 fans were in attendance at Sheraton Walkerhill Hotel to see Cho face the man from whom he had captured the title in the same ballroom back in August '98. But, much like the first time, it was a lousy fight.

Judges Tony Castellano (USA) and Ken Morita (Japan) both scored the fight for Cho, by tallies of 115-112 and 116-113, respectively, while Anek Hongtongkam (Thailand) saw it 115-114 for Penalosa.

The shorter Penalosa, a hard-hitting Filipino lefty, got off to a good start when he scored with a big southpaw right to the face and had the champ staggered in the opening session. But Cho, making his fourth defense, kept his footwork busy enough to frustrate the challenger and take back the initiative.

The 5'7" Cho, some three inches taller, caught Penalosa with a counter shot that almost floored the willing mixer in the fifth. Penalosa, 28, kept stalking, but pitifully failed to throw effective shots, while Cho, 30, kept moving and peppering him with light but fast combinations.

The 10th round saw referee Marty Denkin (USA) take a point from Penalosa for his corner's negligence in failing to wipe the wet, slippery canvas despite his repeated warnings. Cho slipped down time and again in the ninth and 10th, prompting Denkin to finally penalize Penalosa.

Down the stretch, Penalosa, 40-3 (25), was desperate to catch and finish the champ with a flurry of punches, but Cho, 17-0 (7), cleverly grabbed the shorter man with his longer arms to avert his blitzkrieg. The Korean scored with numerous flurries to win an important point in the final stanza and lock up the victory.

Promoter: Kusung Lee's Poong San Promotions

(1-2-00)

Joe Koizumi

Paul Spadafora KO 11 Renato Cornett

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: In his first defense of the IBF lightweight title, Spadafora, 135, retained the crown with a dominant performance over rugged Australian veteran Cornett, 134. Close to 6,000 screaming fans turned out at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, almost all in support of the home-grown Spadafora, to witness the first championship bout in Pittsburgh in 18 years.

Cornett, who had lost to Jimmy Bredahl in 1993 and left boxing for almost four years, had won seven straight bouts in his comeback. It quickly became obvious, however, that the streak wasn't going to hit eight. While Cornett demonstrated the requisite heart, chin, and determination to make a fight of it, his skills simply didn't match his desire.

Spadafora was superior in every respect. Early, "The Pittsburgh Kid" made it tougher on himself than he had to in an attempt to play to the crowd. The usually patient Spadafora eschewed the feeling-out process and, much to Cornett's delight, decided to stand and slug with the Australian. Then, after landing several hard straight lefts that shook Cornett, Spadafora seemed to fall in love with the punch and ignored the sharp, stinging jab that sets up his other punches.

Nevertheless, even though he appeared to be fighting Cornett's fight, Spadafora, 24, easily outworked the willing challenger, displaying a ripping body attack that paid late dividends. By the fourth, Cornett, 34, desperate for a tactic that might aid him, took the low road and resorted to roughhousing, using his head and elbows in an attempt to shake the younger fighter. Spadafora responded with low blows and judicious use of his shoulders.

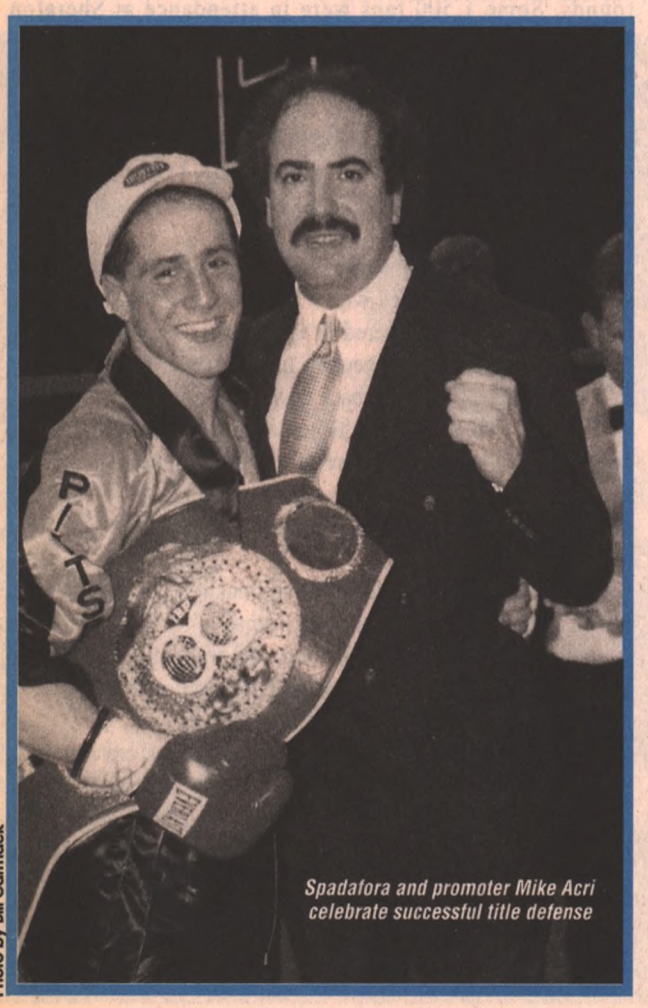


Photo by Bill Carmack

Spadafora and promoter Mike Acri celebrate successful title defense

After a sluggish fifth and a slow sixth, the champion turned up the heat, throwing over 100 punches in the seventh and turning Cornett's face beet red in the process. An equally impressive eighth produced some of the best action in the fight, and the challenger emerged with a cut ear and swelling under both eyes.

Cornett tried to rally in the ninth and scored with two big right hands to open the frame. Spadafora fought back, but the remainder of the round was sloppy, with both fighters missing often and both doing more holding and hitting than in all the previous rounds combined. If the Australian won a single round, it might have been this one.

In the 10th, Cornett landed a hard left hand early, but a stunning counter right by Spadafora opened a cut under Cornett's right eye. Spadafora returned to his earlier bodywork and ravaged the ribcage of his opponent. The champion closed the round by ripping sizzling combinations to the head of the tired, outgunned challenger.

Cornett, 30-3-1 (10), came out slowly for the start of the 11th stanza, and a fusillade of punches from Spadafora had him bleeding from the nose and around both eyes. Fifty-two seconds into the round, the bout was halted by referee Rick Steigerwald on the advice of ringside physician Dr. Lawrence Biskin.

"I got carried away trying to get him out of there," Spadafora, 28-0 (14), said of his spotty but efficient performance. "I should have worked more off my jab. I'm going right back to the gym so I can keep improving and keep my title."

After another defense on ESPN2 in March, Spadafora may be in line for a May 6 HBO bout against tough Canadian mandatory challenger Billy Irwin.

Television: ESPN2

Promoter: Mike Acri Productions and Three Rivers Boxing

(12-17-99)

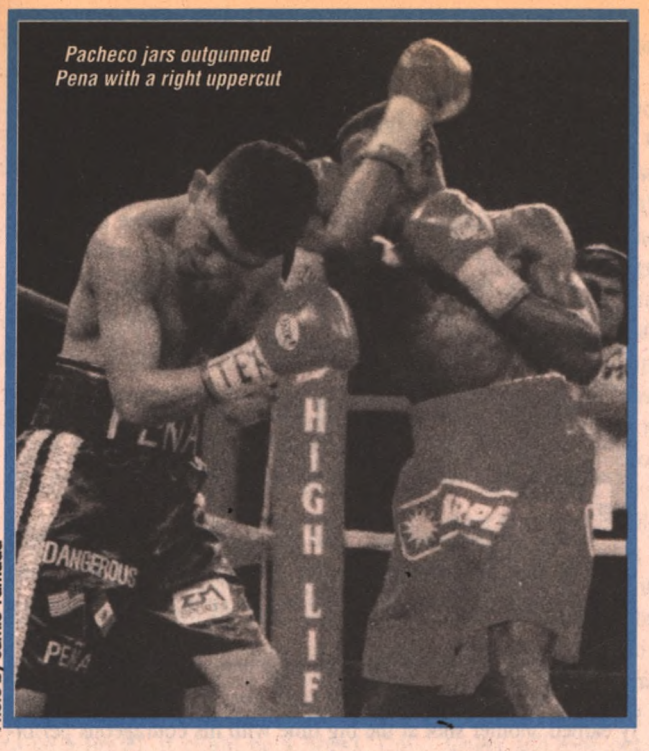
Jim Trunzo

Irene Pacheco KO 11 Pedro Pena

El Paso, Texas: After carefully studying his opponent for 10 rounds, IBF flyweight champion Pacheco exploded, dropping previously unbeaten Pena twice before stopping the gutsy challenger in the 11th round to retain the crown in a tactical encounter before 1,500 fans at the Don Haskins Center.

The end came somewhat suddenly at 2:32 of the 11th. Pena, 16-1 (8), had been providing Pacheco with a game challenge when, without notice, a wicked right hand sent him stumbling into the ropes, prompting referee Robert Gonzales (USA) to rule a knockdown. After an eight-count, Pena courageously walked back into the fray, but was finished with a multi-punch flurry, culminating with a left to the chin that put him on his back for good.

Until then, the fight had been a cerebral chess match, with champion and challenger carefully and skillfully avoiding each other's strengths. But early on, Pacheco, 24-0 (19), had a tough time ducking Pena's hard straight right hand, standing firm as the challenger from Los Angeles chipped away with his best punch. Pacheco never appeared hurt or stunned, though, refusing to acknowledge Pena's power and tenacity. Each time Pena landed,



Pacheco jars outgunned Pena with a right uppercut

Photo by Sumio Yamada

Pacheco would quickly strike back, catching his adversary with a strong right hand of his own.

The two combatants momentarily disregarded caution in the seventh round, engaging in a furious exchange in the champion's corner. Pena pressed the action, forcing Pacheco, 28, to the ropes as he raked him with lefts and rights to the body. But the champion from Colombia wasn't about to let the challenger get the best of him, firing with passion off the ropes as the round came to an end.

The eighth round presented an indication of things to come, as Pacheco, 111¾, connected with a smashing left uppercut midway through the round, momentarily buckling Pena's knees and forcing him to back off. But the tough challenger had come to this border city to take the title, and he re-entered the fight moments later, attacking the champion with a flurry of lefts and rights. The pro-Pena crowd at the Haskins Center was appreciative of the challenger's efforts, and saluted him with an ovation after the round.

For the next two rounds, it looked like Pena, 21, had a legitimate chance at an upset. The fight was close and hard to score, and it didn't appear as if Pacheco had completely figured the challenger out. The two continued to trade evenly, with Pena, 112, on his bicycle, moving to the right, avoiding the dangerous southpaw left hand from Pacheco.

He didn't avoid it for much longer.

Going into the 11th round, Pacheco was only one point ahead on two of the judges' cards, and two points ahead on another. But the champion's punching power soon made the scoring a moot point.

"He was a big, strong 112-pounder, and he is a great fighter," said Pena, who stayed on the canvas for what seemed like eternity after the concussive knockout. "I stayed down a long time because my head felt a little groggy. I'll come back another day. Damn … 11th round … I was so close."

Meanwhile, Pacheco appeared as if he could go another 11 rounds. The champion, determined and incredibly strong, will be difficult to beat.

"He hit me a couple of times very hard," Pacheco said after scoring his second successful title defense and his 13th straight kayo. "He was very strong. But I was in control. I'm just very pleased. I came to the United States for the first time and won. I'm just hoping I can come back and get some crowd to support me."

Television: ESPN2

Promoter: Cedric Kushner Productions

(1-14-00)

Matthew Aguilar

Francisco Castillejo KO 7 Mikael Rask

Leganes, Spain: Odin, the old Norse supreme god, would certainly not have chosen Rask to uphold the warrior reputation of the Vikings. But naturally the WBC, godly in their self-estimation if not in their deeds, had no problem in elevating the Dane to a championship opportunity. Castillejo, 153½, Spain, had little difficulty in repelling that challenge, stopping Rask, 153, Denmark, when the doctor intervened because of bad cuts over both eyes of the challenger in the seventh round to retain the WBC super welterweight title at Plaza de Toros. It was his third defense of the crown he claimed in an upset from American Keith Mullings 11 months earlier.

All records are relative, and Castillejo's distinction in becoming the first Spaniard to retain a world title three times—he was also the first to do so twice—must be considered in the context of modern-day manipulation of rankings. Rask no more deserved a title shot than Hans Christian Andersen, the Danish author of fairy tales who has been dead for 125 years. But fantasy and reality are ill-defined concepts in boxing, and Rask's worth was that he presented no risk. If and when Oscar De La Hoya decides to move up to junior middleweight, Bob Arum wants there to be a straightforward ascendancy awaiting him, and Castillejo being champ makes life a lot less difficult.

Although unbeaten, the 30-year-old Rask's inadequacies were apparent from early on. Castillejo, 47-4 (31), was clearly the stronger man, and a left uppercut near the end of the opening round drew blood from the challenger's nose. Wicked shots to the body diminished him further in the next couple of rounds, and a cut on his right eyebrow looked ominous.

After four rounds, Rask, 13-1 (4), was cut around his left eye, too, and had been shaken by some solid Castillejo punching. Two rounds later, he was saved only by the bell after a series of jabs and crosses impacted hard on his increasingly defenseless head.

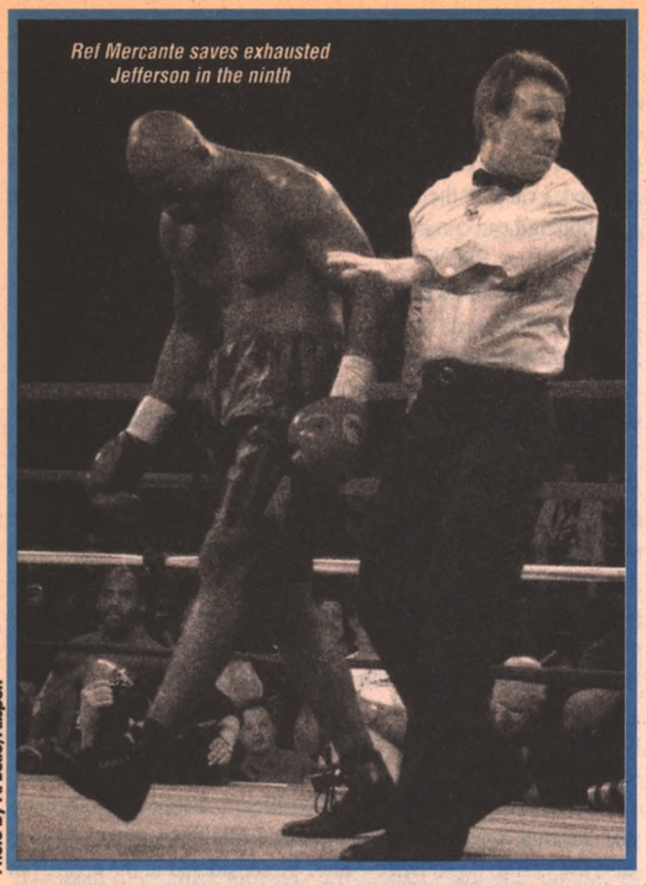
Castillejo's jab continued to spear into Rask's face in the seventh, though a headbutt brought blood from the champion's right eyebrow. In total control, it failed to bother him. More jabs pumping into the wilting challenger's face prompted French referee Alfred Asaro to intervene and, on the advice of the ringside physician, stop the one-sided fight.

Castillejo, 31, may next have to defend against mandatory challenger Tony Marshall from Albany, New York, who should be far more of a handful than Rask proved.

Promoter: Top Rank

(12-17-99)

Brian Doogan



Ref Mercante saves exhausted Jefferson in the ninth

Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

David Izon KO 9 Derrick Jefferson

New York, New York: After coming off the floor to knock out Maurice Harris last November, Jefferson, flush with success, swore he'd "never play it safe." That philosophy, coupled with the sensational nature of the Harris brawl, quickly earned the Detroit slugger another berth on HBO, but this time the very code of combat that endeared him to fans and TV executives alike led to the first defeat of his pro career.

After being lambasted throughout most of the first seven rounds, Izon, trailing helplessly on all three official scorecards, still had enough left to batter a totally exhausted Jefferson into a TKO defeat 11 seconds into the ninth round of a scheduled 10-rounder on the Roy Jones-David Telesco card at Radio City Music Hall.

Jefferson, 243, took the action to Izon, 232, from the onset, barreling forward, arms churning. He mixed his punches well, slamming an assortment of jabs, hooks, crosses, and uppercuts into his opponent's head and body. For the most part, Izon took his punishment stoically, and although he never went down, he was jarred and jolted on numerous occasions. Every now and then, the transplanted African connected with a couple of good shots to keep it from turning into a total rout, but overall he was outpunched four or five to one in practically every round.

The seventh was another big round for Jefferson, and there were a few times when it looked like Izon, 31, might finally crumble under the hail of leather that rained down on him. But he hung tough, showing incredible will and resiliency, and when fatigue overtook Jefferson in the eighth, Izon still had enough left to take advantage of the situation.

Izon, 25-3 (21), connected with several powerful head blows, and when Jefferson attempted to answer back with a sweeping hook, he missed wildly, and a relatively light right that landed on his neck sent him sprawling. Jefferson somehow staggered to his feet and lasted the remainder of the round, but lurched back to his corner like a man who had just guzzled a jug of moonshine. His corner worked frantically to revive him, but he came out for the ninth on rubber legs, and after an Izon combination wobbled him into the ropes, referee Arthur Mercante Jr. intervened. After eight completed rounds, Jefferson, 22-1-1 (18), was leading by tallies of 78-74 (Joe Dwyer), 78-72 (Steve Weisfeld), and 78-73 (Fred Ucci).

"I was hurt, but I endured all that he gave me," said Izon, a native of Nigeria now living in Pensacola, Florida. "I knew that if I endured it, he wouldn't be able to endure what I would give him later."

"It was my inexperience," said the 31-year-old Jefferson, who certainly kept his promise of never playing it safe. "I was going for the knockout. But I don't believe in giving up. I'm coming back."

If his next fight turns out to be anywhere as entertaining as the last two, he'll be welcomed. The same goes for Izon, who certainly earned another shot at the big time with his courageous performance.

Television: HBO
Promoter: Murad Muhammad
(1-15-00)
Nigel Collins

Tim Austin KO 1 Bernardo Mendoza

Tunica, Mississippi: Topping a card where the theme seemed to be to put together the most absurd mismatches the Mississippi State Commission would allow, IBF bantamweight champion Austin, 118, Cincinnati, Ohio, made the fourth defense of his ridiculously easy title reign his most one-sided yet by stopping hapless Mendoza, 117, Chile, in just 1 minute 49 seconds. Earlier in the evening at the Grand Casino Event Center, comebacking heavyweights Ray Mercer and Oliver McCall had stopped their barely-.500 opponents in just two minutes—combined! And against woefully undeserving mandatory challenger Mendoza, Austin made it three strikes for this fiasco of a Don King card.

Mendoza, who had fought just twice since being stopped in five rounds by then-WBA featherweight champion Wilfredo Vazquez in '96, never had a prayer. Austin, 28, drilled the slow, 36-year-old challenger with a southpaw left cross just seconds into the fight, then followed with a pair of jabs and two more lefts. Another vicious left caught Mendoza moments later, and he tackled the champion in an attempt to avoid going down. Referee Elmo Adolph (USA) ruled it a knockdown anyway, and when Mendoza, 50-8 (28), arose, he was greeted with a right-left combination to the chin that stretched him out on his back. Adolph didn't even bother to count.

"I'll fight anyone in the world," Austin, 20-0-1 (19), said afterward, but based on the men he has defended against so far, we'll believe it when we see it.

Television: DirecTV
(12-18-99) ■

Michael Grant

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has a suspect hairdo. Everything he's got is suspect.

People say I should keep my left hand up higher, because of what happened with Golota. But I'm a gutty guy. I may do whatever I may do. I could drop both hands. Whatever I do, it's gonna be beneficial. Lennox Lewis is in trouble. They may look at me and say, "Mike Grant is in trouble; Mike Grant's gonna get knocked out." But Mike Grant ain't afraid of nothing, except God himself.

People think Lennox may jump on me early because of what Golota was able to do early. And I hope he does jump on me early. Because if he does, he's definitely going to leave himself open. If he wants it to be a brawl, it could be a brawl. I'm going to definitely be aggressive in the fight.

Even when Golota hit me, he just was hitting me enough to make me mad. A lot of people may think the Golota fight was a hard fight, but it wasn't a hard fight at all. I'm trying to communicate that to everyone, but they don't want to listen to it because they go by what they see. It was not a hard fight at all. He threw enough punches just to make me mad enough to fight back. That was a mistake on his part, hitting me that much. You never saw me depreciate in any of the rounds. I kept consistent with my punching. I kept consistent with the authority. In fact, I got stronger as that fight went on, and that's what made Golota quit.

And that's exactly what's going to happen to this other cat. If Lennox Lewis ain't gonna quit, he's gonna get knocked out. He has two choices: quit, or get knocked out. People who know me know I don't try to be a trash-talker. But I'm just speaking on behalf of belief. I know exactly what's going to happen. Don't get me wrong, I always take each fight knowing, hey, this guy has a chance to beat me. But I always use that and make myself work hard.

One reason I know Lennox is in trouble is my size. Lennox doesn't usually have to look up at his opponents, but he's going to have to overcome that against me. I know that Lennox's uppercuts were a big weapon vs. Holy, but with my height, that punch won't do much for him. He won't be able to land an uppercut with maximum power. And besides, the uppercut, that's my punch! He can try to use it, but it isn't going benefit him.

One thing he's gonna say in his head that's gonna keep him motivated, once he knows that he's losing these rounds, is that he's the champ. But that won't be good enough, because me being the challenger encourages me more. I'm at the point where I need to go take it from him.

He definitely has something I want, but most important of all is the placement and the position of what I'm fighting for. The placement of knowing that I'll be going down in history, sitting in placement with Muhammad Ali, sitting in placement with Larry Holmes, sitting in placement with Joe Louis—knowing that I came as a challenger and took out the champion. Many people perceive me as the heir apparent, and I strive to make them look good for calling me that. After I beat Lewis, I will be the undisputed champ, holding the linear title like all those great champions from the past. I feel great going into this fight. I'm excited about this fight. It's never been a money issue. This $3-million doesn't make it for me at all. It's beneficial, of course, but it's not making me hungry at all.

Even though Evander is my friend, and he's fought Lennox twice, I never really talked to him about what it's like fighting Lewis. How he matched up with Lennox doesn't apply to me. I probably won't even look at any film of this guy. That's how confident I am—not overconfident, but I'm just being protective of myself. I know that some people say looking at the film is being protective of yourself, but I think by not looking at any film, I'm being protective of myself. I don't want to be influenced by what he's done against other guys, because it doesn't really apply to me.

For this fight, I'm going to train longer and harder than usual. I'm going to do everything I need to do, because I'm motivated for this fight. I'm glad that people requested this fight. I'm glad I got the support from HBO to put this fight on. I'm training two solid months, from the end of February up to the fight.

That brings me to my trainer, Don Turner. Critics like to point out that Don has faced Lewis three times before—twice with Holy, and once with Henry Akinwande—and hasn't beaten him yet. Well, I look at it like this: Don Turner had a shorter fighter with guts and heart, and he had a taller fighter without guts and heart. Now he's got a tall fighter *with* guts and heart. Now what's Lennox got in front of him? He's got a monster in front of him now! He's got everything dangerous about both of the guys Don trained that he faced before, and it's all complete in this one fighter. The height, the guts, and the determination to go out there and claim what's already his.

Here's how it's going to go down: First, of course, I'm gonna say my "God bless" to him right in the middle of the ring. Then I'm gonna go back to my corner and hug my trainer. But then when the bell dings, I'm gonna go out there, I'm gonna jump around, I'm gonna shake, I'm gonna go left, I'm gonna go right, I'm gonna box him, I'm gonna stick and move, frustrate him a little bit, then start to take it to him, step in. Once I see the first indication of him backing up, that's where I'm gonna take advantage of his weaknesses. In this fight, I'm going to identify all of his weaknesses. I don't need to watch film on him; I'll see the weaknesses for myself, and I'll exploit them. I can spot weaknesses right there in the ring.

Once those weaknesses are exposed, I see a right hand landing. I see a few right hands landing. If he's gonna roll over, he's gonna roll over. And if he doesn't, you know who's going to have his hands up.

I'm not naive. I know we get knocked down in life. But it's about the person who rises up, and I already know I got that in me. I believe in myself. And that crowd's going to believe in me and root for me to bring the title back home to America. It's a great feeling to know that a country will be backing you up like that. The crowd at the Garden, they'll be screaming, "Let's go Mike! Let's go Mike!" Everyone from Norristown to Las Vegas to Cali, they're gonna be there. They're going to drown out those noisy Brits, especially when I'm named the new champion. ■

Roy Jones

(Continued from page 39)

for-pound best that he didn't knock out a man of Telesco's modest accomplishments? Not that Jones *couldn't* have knocked him out, mind you. All data strongly indicates that such a feat is well within the powers of the undisputed light heavyweight champion. But after going the distance with his challenger, Jones revealed that he'd fractured his left wrist in a motorcycle accident 3½ weeks before the fight.

"Everybody told me to cancel the fight," said Jones, who also claimed that he hid his injury from the New York State Athletic Commission. "My dad even said, 'Don't fight that way.' I said, 'Dad, God gives you an opportunity [to fight at Radio City] once in a lifetime, and this is my opportunity. I have to take it.' I refused to pull out because that's not me."

His sentiment is easy to understand, especially in the light of the fact that Jones must have known he could beat Telesco one-handed—if indeed, that is what he was. There were a couple of left hooks to Telesco's ribcage that hurt him more than any of the rights that landed upstairs, and, in retrospect, you can't help but wonder exactly how serious the injury was.

Some would argue, on the other hand, that if handicapped, Jones only bolstered his claim to greatness by winning every round against a big, strong adversary with two good hands. But if Jones came into the ring damaged goods, nobody really got what they paid for, and once again, when boxing was in the mainstream spotlight, the fight itself was nothing special.

The productions values, however, were first-rate, and if ever there was a legitimate excuse for such over-the-top razzmatazz, boxing's debut at the showbiz shrine was it. Jones joined the high-kicking Rockettes on stage for a musical number about an hour before his fight, Whitney Houston sang "America The Beautiful," and rappers Method Man and Red Man joined Jones in his ringwalk. Ironically, it was the dazzling quality of the trappings that emphasized the ultimately tedious nature of the fight. It was as if Whitney had sung well, but had a sore throat and never reached for those high notes and nuances that make her rendition of any song special. It makes you wonder how many newcomers, attracted to the fight by the hype, went home must asking themselves, "Is that all there is?"

Several things quickly became apparent as soon as the fight began. Telesco was clearly the biggest and strongest-looking opponent Jones has faced as a light heavyweight. He was also quick enough on his feet to make Jones miss a number of the lunging powershots he launched during the first two rounds, and even when Jones landed a lead right, Telesco was usually pulling away, taking much of the sting out of the blow. It also quickly became self-evident that the challenger wasn't going to take too many chances. Reverse was his gear of choice, and this, plus his size, durability, and lively legs allowed him to stay the course.

In the third, with prospects of a quick kayo rapidly waning, Jones wiggled his butt and switched to a southpaw stance. But he wasn't any more successful as a lefty—nor any less for that matter. A few solid shots hit home, but Telesco kept moving, and Jones went back to an orthodox stance the next round.

Mutual frustration led to more trashtalking than punching in the fourth, and referee Arthur Mercante Sr. told them both to cut out the chatter and get down to business. Telesco's first aggressive move also came in the fourth when he rushed in, wrapped his arms around Jones' waist, and bent him backward over the ropes. It was not the stuff of legend.

Jones tried a new gimmick in the fifth, standing in a neutral corner and motioning for Telesco to come in and fight. The reformed drug dealer from Port Chester, New York, obliged and managed to land a few hooks to the body, but paid for his boldness when Jones whacked him back with harder bodyblows of his own.

If Telesco came close to winning a round, it was the sixth. He bulled Jones into the ropes and dug to the body, but failed to inflict any serious damage. His attack soon petered out, and midway through the next round, boos began to emanate from the crowd of 5,932.

Telesco, with abrasions around both eyes, made his only sustained attack in the eighth and ninth rounds, pinning Jones along the ropes and hacking away the best he could. Judging by the way Jones flared back with superior punches, you have to figure the champion only allowed himself to get into such a position because of the countering opportunities it offered.

It was in the 10th that Jones delivered his best punch of the night, a compact left hook that whizzed under Telesco's extended right hand and slammed into his ribs with devastating force. It was the biggest crisis of the fight for Telesco, and he was clearly hurt. But he showed grit by refusing to fold, hanging tough, and punching back just enough to make it through the round.

Unlike most of his other recent performances, Jones didn't coast the last few rounds, and stayed on the offensive. It looked like he really would have liked to put Telesco away and provide a fitting climax to the proceedings, but couldn't quite pull it off.

"I would have knocked him out if I had both hands," said Jones after raising his record to 41-1 (33) with unanimous scores of 120-106 (Sid Rubenstein), 120-108 (Luis Rivera), and 120-108 (Melvina Latham).

Most likely Jones was right, but the hand wasn't the only factor involved. Due to the fact that he's blessed with such astonishing speed and coordination, Jones has developed a unique style of his own. Apparently, he never felt the need to master some of the traditional techniques other fighters use to finish a wounded but stubborn foe like Telesco. Jones' disposition also plays a significant role; he's never had the customary warrior's mindset.

"It very much has to do with attitude," said HBO boxing analyst Larry Merchant. "Jones, who calls himself a great athlete who just happens to be a boxer, rarely feels the need to stop a guy. I'm a little surprised to find a few people finding fault with the fight. His critics claim he lacks passion, but nobody can be as good at what he does as Roy Jones without passion. The problem is that he rarely displays that passion."

IBF middleweight champion Bernard Hopkins, who was at the fight to lobby again for a rematch with Jones, had his own spin on what took place inside the ring that night.

"Roy Jones does what Roy Jones does," Hopkins told the *Philadelphia Daily News*. "He outboxes guys. It was easy. Telesco showed a lot of heart, but he was outclassed and outskilled. If you can't force Roy to fight, really fight, he's not

going to do any more than he has to."

Merchant feels that Jones is the victim of "selective memory," and like all fighters who reach his level of prominence, he not only has to compete with flesh-and-blood rivals, but also with the ghosts of the past, and that sometimes facts can be overlooked in the process.

"When we talk about the great light heavyweights of the past, only Archie Moore and Bob Foster were knockout punchers, had what I call paralyzing power," said Merchant. "Most of the others—Gene Tunney, Ezzard Charles, Billy Conn, Harold Johnson, and maybe Michael Spinks—were not punchers of that sort. They had a lot of decisions on their records, and a lot of their knockouts came early in their careers against lesser opposition.

"At the end of the day, Jones is an extraordinary talent, and we must appreciate him while we can. The next guys down the road could make him look even better than he appears now. Roy could look even more incandescent in hindsight."

Still, Merchant is the first to agree that style matters very much in boxing, and he can't help but wonder how strong Jones' influence will be on the future of the sport.

"Look back 100 years, and see how different boxing was back then," he said. "Boxing as we know it probably started with Gene Tunney. Is Roy Jones the prototype for the kind of fighter we'll be seeing 50 years from now? Or is he one of a kind?"

Naturally, those with a taste for more traditional fistic fare fervently hope that the latter is the case. A great athlete who happens to be a boxer can only carry the sport so far. What the Sweet Science really needs to take it into the new century is a boxer who happens to be a great athlete. For many, Jones' big night in the Big Apple only deepened the suspicion that he's probably not the one for the job. ■

Movies

(Continued from page 42)

was a great story, and I was thrilled to be on board. Believe it or not, 24 hours after I met Jackie, I was in a nail salon getting a manicure when James Toney walked in with his girlfriend. He was very charismatic, larger than life. He said, 'Hey girls, the manicures are on me.' He won a lot of fans that day."

Kallen's lengthy legal battles with Toney stalled production for a while, but the movie is back on track. Other movies that will prominently feature women are *The Christy Martin Story*, which is in development, and *The Opponent*, an independent feature about a fictional female boxer that is currently in production in New York City, starring former *Baywatch* babe Erika Eleniak. The rigors of playing a boxer that prompted Eleniak to comment that her days on the set of *The Opponent* "sometimes make me miss the times I thought having sand in my swimsuit was an uncomfortable experience!"

While movies like the overlooked *Twenty Four Seven*, last year's *Fight Club*, *Snake Eyes*, and the TV-movie *Marciano*, and current releases *The Hurricane* and *Play It To The Bone* have received mixed reviews—and in the case of *Snake Eyes*, dismal box office—that hasn't stopped Hollywood's enthusiasm for the sport.

Director Ron Shelton, whose sports movies range from *Bull Durham* to *Tin Cup*, directed *Play It To The Bone*, the story of two fighters who take matches on about 10 hours notice on the undercard of a Mike Tyson bout. Ironically, days before the movie's opening, in a case of life imitating art imitating life, flyweight Isidro Garcia, who went to the Fantasy Springs Casino to watch a boxing match, ended up fighting in one. He had to borrow everything, from trunks to protective cup, but won anyway.

In a similar vein, *Play It To The Bone* is based on an actual 1965 fight in which two fighters were recruited at the last minute for the undercard of a Sugar Ray Robinson fight. Those two fighters put on "the greatest preliminary fight I ever saw," according to publicist Bill Caplan. A search is now underway to find the two fighters, Polo Corona and Pulga Serrano, who were the inspiration for the movie. So far, the producers have been unable to locate them. (Anyone with any information on either Corona or Serrano is encouraged to call Caplan at 818-831-0046.)

"It was George Foreman who said boxing is the sport to which all other sports aspire," studio executive Jason Weiss said about his pet project, another boxing movie, *The Glass Jaw*. In his tenure at Paramount Pictures, Weiss began to develop the movie, but when two other boxing movies, the Kallen project and *Night Train* went into production at the same studio, *The Glass Jaw* was temporarily shelved.

Over at Warner Brothers, director Brad Silberling, whose hit movie *City Of Angels* secured him a nice deal with the studio, is developing the Hollywood version of *On The Ropes*, the feature-length documentary that looked at the lives of three up-and-coming amateur boxers from Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant district. Then there's the hard-hitting Irish documentary *Southpaw: The Francis Barrett Story* that's due for U.S. release later this year. Director Liam McGrath described the movie as "an account of a young boxer's fight against prejudice." Other European filmmakers are also getting into the act with *Knockout*, a look at a boxer whose manager convinces him to take up country music when his ring career is over. And British film-maker Shan Martin takes a less humorous approach in the project she's developing: *The Kid* (not to be confused with the 1997 boxing movie of the same name), about the tragically brief life of "Kid" Akeem Anifowoshe.

"He was a good young fighter," said Martin. "In the late-'80s, everyone in Las Vegas was talking about him. After one horrific fight with Robert Quiroga [for the IBF junior bantamweight title in June '91], he almost died. Akeem never really recovered and he never, ever fought again. He drifted into drugs, ended up homeless, was arrested in Vegas, and put into detention in Arizona. He was deported to his home country of Nigeria in 1997 and died a few months later at the ripe old age of 27."

If that sounds depressing, consider the brighter side of things. When asked if any movies are in the works focusing on the life and career of Butterbean, one studio executive, who asked to remain anonymous, was silent for moment. Then he asked, "Butterball? Did you just make up that name?" When informed that there really was a boxer named *Butterbean*, he went on to assure that a movie about the rotund four-round champion was unlikely to happen anytime soon. ■

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BACK ISSUES OF KO

Back issues of several editions of *KO Magazine,* the acknowledged leader in boxing journalism, are still available in limited quantity. Since its inception in 1980, *KO* has become known for its quality stories and columns and peak-action photographs. Plus, each issue contains a full-color centerfold. Don't delay. Supplies are running out!

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June 1983: WBA Jr. Middleweight Champion Davey Moore: Bracing For Duran's Last Stand. Color Pinup: Donald Curry. Interview: Pinklon Thomas. Also: Duran-Cuevas, Hagler-Sibson.

Aug. 1983: Michael Spinks: King Of The Light Heavyweights ... But The Glory Can't Erase The Sadness. Color Pinup: Johnny Bumphus. Interview: Jones & Rappaport. Also: Jones-McCrory, Pryor-Arguello II preview, world's best fighter poll, Jeff Chandler, Mark Breland, Leon Spinks.

Oct. 1983: Is Larry Holmes Finished? Color Pinup: Greg Page. Interview: Marvis Frazier. Also: Marvin Hagler, Bobby Chacon, Jack Dempsey.

Aug. 1984: WBC Heavyweight Champion Terrible Tim Witherspoon: A Superstar Of Tomorrow? Color Pinup: Rocky Lockridge. Interview: Sugar Ray Leonard. Also: Marvin Hagler, Gomez-LaPorte.

Oct. 1984: Golden Boy Mark Breland: Can He Be The Next Sugar Ray? Color Pinup: Jaime Garza. Interview: Aaron Pryor. Also: Bramble-Mancini, Sugar Ray Leonard.

Nov. 1984: Thomas Hearns: "Hagler Is Shakin' Like A Leaf On A Tree!" Color Pinup: Tim Witherspoon. Interview: Livingstone Bramble. Also: Rosario-Davis, Marlon Starling.

Jan. 1985: The Wide-Open Heavyweight Division: Who Will Take Control? Color Pinup: Bill Costello. Interview: Tyrone Crawley. Also: Harry Arroyo, Curry-Pryor, Barry McGuigan.

Feb. 1985: Gerry Cooney: How Far Can He Go This Time? Color Pinup: Michael Spinks. Interview: Ray Mancini. Also: Dream fights, Hector Camacho.

March 1985: Next For Marvelous Marvin Hagler: The Only Fight That Really Matters. Color pinup: Mike McCallum. Interview: Thomas Hearns. Also: Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza, Holmes-Bonecrusher.

May 1985: Thomas Hearns: KO Fighter Of The Year. Color Pinup: Gerry Cooney. Also: Camacho-Ramirez, Truth Williams, Year In Review.

July 1985: Aaron Pryor: Has Hawk Time Run Out? Color Pinup: Donald Curry. Interview: Greg Page. Also: Ray Mancini, James Shuler, Costello-Hatcher.

Aug. 1985: King Cobra: "Hagler-Hearns Is Done And I'm Better Than Both Of Them!" Color Pinup: John Mugabi. Interview: Bobby Czyz. Also: Larry Holmes, Roberto Duran, DeWitt-Lee.

Dec. 1985: Pinklon Thomas: "Larry Holmes Betrayed Boxing." Color Pinup: Hagler-Mugabi. Also: Mike McCallum, Tyrell Biggs, Camacho-Ramirez.

Jan. 1986: Macho Mania! Hector Camacho Takes Aim At 10 Tough Targets. Color Pinup: Jimmy Paul. Interview: Alexis Arguello. Also: Truth Williams, Curry-McCrory.

July 1986: Tyson, McGuigan, Hagler: The Stars Catch Fire And Boxing Is Hot Again! Color Pinup: Azumah Nelson. Also: Camacho-Chavez.

Dec. 1986: Larry Holmes' Message To Mike Tyson: "Show Me You Can Kick My Butt!" Color pinup: Mark Breland. Interview: Holmes. Plus: Witherspoon-Bruno, Evander Holyfield, Cruz-McGuigan, Danny Lopez.

Feb. 1987: Upset Of The Decade: Has Honeyghan Cut Short The Curry Era? Color Pinup: Marvin Johnson. Interview: Bobby Czyz. Also: Edwin Rosario, Hector Camacho.

Sept. 1987: Bobby Czyz: Finally, His Accomplishments Match His Appeal. Color Pinup: Sugar Ray. Interview: Lloyd Honeyghan. Also: Mark Breland, Hector Camacho, Weekend Warriors.

Oct. 1987: Greatness Beckons: When Will Mike Tyson Answer The Call? Color Pinup: Michael Olajide. Interview: Tyrell Biggs. Also: Paz-Haugen, Marvin Hagler.

Nov. 1987: Michael Spinks: The War With Tyson Is Okay With Him. Color Pinup: Vinny Pazienza. Interview: Frankie Duarte. Also: Matthew Hilton, Hagler-Czyz.

Dec. 1987: Mike Tyson: Undisputed Heavyweight King-But Is He Losing His Loyal Subjects? Color Pinup: Matthew Hilton. Interview: Barry McGuigan. Also: Aaron Pryor, Mike McCallum.

Jan. 1988: The Collapse Of A Hero: Why Breland Never Hit The Mark Of Greatness. Color Pinup: Michael Spinks. Interview: Aaron Pryor. Also: Michael Nunn, Alexis Arguello, lightweights.

Feb. 1988: Pazienza & Haugen Go For Each Other's Throats. Color Pinup: Marlon Starling. Interview: Bob Arum. Also: Tate-Olajide, ESPN Boxing.

May 1988: KO Exclusive-Mike Tyson, As Only Mike Tyson Knows Him. Color Pinup: Mike McCallum. Interview: Thomas Hearns. Also: Tyson-Spinks Poll, Michael Dokes, Virgil Hill.

July 1988: Superfight History Dictates: Don't Expect The Expected From Tyson-Spinks. Color Pinup: Roger Mayweather. Interview: Dr. Ferdie Pacheco. Also: Roberto Duran, Azumah Nelson, Barkley-Olajide.

Aug. 1988: Tyson-Spinks: KO's Fearless Forecast Of Superfight '88. Color Pinup: Buddy McGirt. Interview: Matthew Hilton. Also: Lockridge-Knight, Evander Holyfield, Lloyd Honeyghan.

Sept. 1988: Tyson-Spinks, The Aftermath—What If Tyson Wins; What If Spinks Wins? Color Pinup: Frank Tate. Interview: Marlon Starling. Also: Barry McGuigan, Simon Brown, risk-taking.

Oct. 1988: Middleweight Terrorism: Iran Bombs The Hit Man. Color Pinup: Don Lalonde. Interview: Frank Bruno. Also: Roger Mayweather, Marvin Hagler.

Jan. 1989: The Troubled Times Of Mike Tyson. Color Pinup: Lloyd Honeyghan. Interview: Gil Clancy. Also: Meldrick Taylor, Jeff Fenech, Boxing's Champs.

Feb. 1989: George Foreman Is Born Again. Color Pinup: Meldrick Taylor. Interview: Bill Cayton. Also: The Olympics, Davey Hilton, John Mugabi, Barry McGuigan.

Sept. 1989: "I Beat Up Tyson Before, I'll Do It Again," by Carl Williams. Color Pinup: Michael Nunn. Also: Chavez-Mayweather, Brian Mitchell, Marv Albert.

Nov. 1989: The Real Duran; The Stories Behind The Legend. Color Pinup: Orlando Canizales. Interview: Mike Trainer. Also: Edwin Rosario, Rosi-Van Horn.

Feb. 1990: George Foreman Risks A Multimillion-Dollar Shot At Tyson. Color Pinup: Brian Mitchell. Interview: Riddick Bowe. Also: Simon Brown, Molina-Lopez, East vs. West.

May 1990: Chavez vs. Taylor: The Best Matchup In The Last Five Years. Color Pinup: Daniel Zaragoza. Interview: Pernell Whitaker. Also: Leonard-Hearns, Glenn McCrory, Prince Charles Williams.

June 1990: A Sugar-Free Future? Thomas Hearns Is Looking Up. Color Pinup: Glenn McCrory. Interview: Michael Moorer. Also: Matthew Hilton, Molina-Suarez, Foreman-Cooney, Camacho-Paz.

July 1990: KO Interview-Sugar Ray Leonard. Color Pinup: Jorge Paez. Also: Michael Nunn, Buster Douglas, Jibaro Perez, the Olympians.

Aug. 1990: Meldrick Taylor: Brilliance In Defeat. Color Pinup: Buster Douglas. Interview: Teddy Atlas. Also: Buddy McGirt, Dokes-Ruddock, Simon Brown.

Sept. 1990: KO Interview-Buster Douglas. Color Pinup: Macho Camacho. Also: Thomas Hearns, Nigel Benn, Greg Haugen, Boxing Hall of Fame.

Oct. 1990: Send In The Clown: Is Jorge Paez A Phenom Or A Fraud? Color Pinup: Paul Banke. Interview: Tony Lopez. Also: Chavez-Taylor II, Jesse Benavides.

Nov. 1990: The Comeback Of Mike Tyson: A Crooked Course Straight To The Top. Color Pinup: Tony Lopez. Interview: Don Dunphy. Also: Davis-Breland, Riddick Bowe, federal commission.

Dec. 1990: The Heart Of The Matter: Who Will Survive The Holyfield-Douglas War? Color Pinup: Terry Norris. Interview: Virgil Hill. Also: Michael Carbajal, Ruelas Brothers, Best Fighter Poll.

Jan. 1991: Macho Ado About Nothing? Why Hector Camacho Wants To Be Believed. Color Pinup: Meldrick Taylor. Interview: Irving Rudd. Also: Sugar Ray Leonard, Orlando Canizales, Vinny Pazienza.

Feb. 1991: 10 Fighters To Fear: Boxing's Most Destructive Hitters. Color Pinup: Razor Ruddock. Interview: Ray Mercer. Also: Roberto Duran, Saoul Mamby, Mills Lane, Sugar Ray Robinson.

May 1991: Ruddock Eyes The Big Upset Of Tyson. Color Pinup: Luisito Espinosa. Interview: Jeff Fenech. Also: Virgil Hill, Pernell Whitaker, Alex Ramos, Simon Brown, Buddy McGirt.

June 1991: Exclusive KO Interview: Evander Holyfield. Color Pinup: Raul Perez. Also: Norris-Leonard, Charles Williams, champs of 1971 vs. 1991, Chavez.

July 1991: Riddick Bowe: Is He Destined To Be Heavyweight Champ? Color Pinup: Michael Carbajal. Interview: Buddy McGirt. Also: Bobby Czyz, Buster Douglas, Mark Breland.

Aug. 1991: Desert Storm II: Will The Tyson-Ruddock Rematch Be Different? Color Pinup: Loreto Garza. Interview: Michael Carbajal. Also: Brown-Blocker, Fenech-Nelson preview, Harold Brazier, Yuh-Carbajal.

Sept. 1991: Remember Me? I Won The Fight! What "The Real Deal" Still Has To Deal With. Color Pinup: Ray Mercer. Interview: Eddie Futch. Also: Larry Holmes, southpaw heavyweights, Toney-Nunn, Brown-Taylor.

Oct. 1991: Thomas Hearns Works Another Miracle! Now There Are More Hills Left To Climb. Color Pinup: Humberto Gonzalez. Interview: Mike McCallum. Also: Norris-Curry, Richard Steele, Troy Dorsey.

Nov. 1991: Mike Tyson-The Only Heavyweight That Matters. Color Pinup: Thomas Hearns. Interview: Troy Dorsey. Also: Fenech-Nelson, James Toney, lost art of bodypunching.

Dec. 1991: Tyson vs. Holyfield-The Experts Analyze The Elements That Will Decide The Fight. Color Pinup: Joey Gamache. Also: Michael Moorer, Pernell Whitaker, Greg Richardson, Robert Quiroga.

Jan. 1992: The Tyson-Holyfield Showdown: An Exclusive Forecast By George Foreman. Color Pinup: Myung Woo Yuh. Also: Fenech-Nelson, TV announcers, boxing's toughest men, Toney-McCallum.

March 1992: KO Interview Mike Tyson: An In-Depth, Toe-To-Toe Talk With Boxing's Biggest Star. Color Pinup: Michael Moorer. Also: Thomas Hearns, Tracy Patterson, Larry Holmes, best fighter poll.

May 1992: Division-By-Division Faceoffs: The Best Of '92 vs. The Best Of '67. Color Pinup: James Warring. Interview: Hector Camacho. Also: Tommy Morrison, Bert Cooper, Gianfranco Rosi.

June 1992: If Not Tyson Or Holyfield, Then Who? Bowe? Moorer? Ruddock? Lewis? Mercer? Color Pinup: James Toney. Interview: Shelly Finkel. Also: Scotty Olson, overrated and underrated fighters, Orlin Norris, Whitaker-Pineda.

July 1992: The Title Reign of Evander Holyfield: A Reason To Hide ... Or A Reason For Pride? Color Pinup: Buddy McGirt. Interview: Julian Jackson. Also: Kelley-Dorsey, Nelson-Fenech, Kennedy McKinney.

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New Faces

(Continued from page 18)

Hoya, Derrell Coley, and Shane Mosley.

"I want to be a household name," said the 27-year-old Taylor. "In Australia, I'm pretty well-known, but I would like to be world-known. I own my house, I have two cars, and four motorcycles. I live comfortably, but I think it's time for a swim in the deep end. I would love to be involved with all the hype of a Las Vegas fight, and I'm looking forward to going over there to the United States. I think people would like me. They took a liking to [fellow Australian and three-division former champ] Jeff Fenech, and he was an aggressive type of fighter, and I'm an aggressive fighter.

"The aggression comes from the buildup I get before a fight. I shut out the world. I get moody and I don't like to talk too much. I don't like people to ask a lot of questions. I'm stand-offish. I like to hibernate. I get very shallow minded, very focused. I have the attitude like someone is trying to break into my house and kill my family. People look at my eyes and know to stay away. Even Mother knows to stay away."

If Taylor keeps on running through opponents, it will be increasingly difficult to keep him away from a big fight in the United States. He has an impressive resume, owning knockout victories over former WBA lightweight champ Livingstone Bramble and welterweight contender Willy Wise, who easily beat an aged Julio Cesar Chavez last year.

But while those two wins are impressive on paper, a closer look raises questions. Bramble is way past his prime, and Wise has virtually no punching power whatsoever. It's still unclear whether Taylor has the kind of top-level talent to gain success in America.

"I saw him fight Corey Johnson in Ireland [a 10-round draw]," said Don Majeski, a New York City agent who is close to the fight game in Australia and has worked in the past with Australia-based WBC super lightweight champ Kostya Tszyu. "Shannan's a guy who walks in, comes forward, and throws punches. He's a typical Australian fighter in the mold of a Jeff Fenech. He's a brawler. Now, he's not as good as Fenech, but I think he's a good prospect who hasn't reached his potential. He has power, a lot of heart, and he's strong. I think one of his flaws could be his boxing ability; he gets hit with some punches. But that's the risk an exciting fighter takes, because he's going to bring the fight to you. I think he could be very pleasing to an American audience."

One glaring problem, Majeski points out, is that no one is breaking down the door for Taylor to fight in America. Taylor is contractually obligated to Bill Mordey, one of the top promoters in Australia. Coming to the States could mean redefining that relationship, and Taylor is fiercely loyal about keeping his bond with Mordey intact.

"Taylor's not going to fight on any show without having a promotional contract with someone here," Majeski said. "Besides, people put too much emphasis on the United States. Taylor is like the Klitschko brothers; they make money where they are. I'm sure Taylor is making money where he is. In this country, you can't get a fight unless you sign away your promotional rights. Why do that? Fenech drew 12,000 and 15,000 people every time he fought in Australia, so why come here to the United States if he's making money down there? I'm sure Shannan Taylor would come over with the right offer. Right now, he has enough activity to keep busy and the money to remain housed and fed. If he keeps winning the way he is, I'm sure Shannan will be over here in a year."

Taylor is tough because he came up tough. Bulli is a mining town that took a severe hit a few years ago when Australia underwent an economic shakeup. Local shops and most of the mines closed. Taylor's father, Steve, was a miner (just as his own father was), but was injured working and forced to undergo surgery, which resulted in having pins permanently placed in both arms. With his father on disability, Taylor began to box, drawn to the sport at the age of 10 when he and a group of friends happened by a local gym.

Taylor had amateur success, advancing so quickly that he was sparring professionals in his teens. His family rallied around his achievements in the ring, and supported him through sacrifice. His father sold a number of his horses to pay for Taylor's traveling expenses while he was an amateur.

"A lot of guys I grew up with have nothing in life; they depended on those mines," Taylor said. "Bulli is beautiful, but I came from a tough area, a desperation area. All the mines in Wollongong are closed. I want to win enough money from my first world title to buy my family a holiday house in Queensland."

When Fox Sports came to Australia, the cable network signed Taylor to a multifight contract. He recently renewed the contract, and with Mordey leading the way, Taylor is able to make from $100,000 to $200,000 a year.

"That's why I haven't really been rushing to get to the States," Taylor said. Now, however, is as good a time as any. With the caliber of his opposition increasing, he's going to need quality sparring partners. He prepared for his third-round knockout of Lonny Beasley in July 1999 by sparring against amateurs and kids. According to Taylor, there are between 250 and 270 professionals spread throughout Australia, which leaves quality sparring partners at a minimum. That's a problem Taylor will have to solve if he's to advance to the next level.

One problem Taylor feels he already has overcome is his hands. From 1993 to '97, Taylor was always breaking them or experiencing stress fractures in his wrists. In a 10-rounder against tough Sean Sullivan in April '97, Taylor fought with two broken hands, but still managed to gut out a decision victory. Since then, Taylor says, his hands have been okay.

"The biggest disadvantage about Shannan being in Australia is that the boxing public in the U.S. and Europe don't see him," said American promoter Mike Acri, who works with Mordey. "But I think that Shannan will probably be over here this summer."

Just one suggestion when he does come, Mike: Post warning signs around the training camp that say, "Beware of the Bulli Blaster." ■

Wayne McCullough

(Continued from page 27)

the desire to again be recognized as the best in his domain runs deep. It has been more than three years since he last held a world title, the WBC bantamweight belt he pried from Yasuei Yakushiji in Nagoya in another unyielding struggle, and he believes he can scale those heights again. His slide down the WBC rankings after the Morales defeat will not help in securing another title challenge. His promoters, America Presents, McCullough claims, have not done much to help either.

"I made Mat Tinley in the boxing business," said McCullough, once so tight with the former television mogul that he says they were like brothers. "I was 100 percent with him. But he got too big for his boots, looked for bigger things, and I was no longer his concern. I've not been treated properly since.

"But my contract with America Presents runs out in July, and July's not so far away now. I'm open to offers. The way I fight, I make my opponent fight, and there's always excitement, so I'm sure some promoter will want to work with me.

"America Presents could have got [IBF featherweight champion] Paul Ingle, but didn't do anything about it. At the moment I don't know when I'm fighting next. Everything will shape up better after July, as I can do what I want then. I will be 30 with little mileage on the clock. I still feel fresh. I've never abused myself, and I proved against Morales that I've still got it. People know that Wayne McCullough, that iron man, will give his best."

Opponents know, too, that hitting him with their best shot will have little effect on the man in the iron chin—other than making him mad. ■

Brian Doogan is THE RING's European correspondent.

What If?

(Continued from page 31)

Evander Holyfield had strutted out of the Thomas & Mack Center with not one, not two, but three championship belts draped around his torso, as, ironically enough given the controversy of their first match, many ringside viewers felt he deserved to?

It would have certainly denied us a chance to learn what we soon will of long-time mystery man Lennox Lewis when the most noble title in sports—the undisputed heavyweight championship—is dangling on the line. Is this British bomber a real champ or a real chump?

And what if Ike Ibeabuchi could have erased his time in the can to join the heavyweight clan? Would "The President" be elected the baddest big man alive, perhaps running Lewis straight out of office?

And speaking of successors, what if ESPN2 had never picked up the void vacated by USA's *Tuesday Night Fights* when the long-running series was pulled a couple of years back?

For one, we'd be deprived of the charismatic Max Kellerman, who, along with charming color man Teddy Atlas, forces us to ask another question whenever the names Sean O'Grady and Al Albert are ever mentioned to us: "What about them?"

And what about the future? What if De La Hoya and Trinidad decide to dance again, and instead of cutting footloose, they provide us with the kind of fistic fireworks we were expecting from them the first time? What if Tyson learned to play by the rules, somehow regaining enough stability and confidence to provide the iron the heavyweight division is so woefully deficient of? What if all the powers-that-be in boxing—the Kings, the Arums, the Duvas, the Kushners—can put all their petty differences aside and, for once, all try to get along?

What if we found some order and justice in this game? What if boxing finally cleaned itself up? What if the fans finally got what they paid for?

What a thought. What a dream.

Man, what a traffic jam! ■

Ted Bodenrader is a freelance writer based in Boston, Massachusetts, and a regular contributor to this magazine.

Quartey vs. Vargas

(Continued from page 34)

STRENGTH AND STAMINA

This is probably the 22-year-old Vargas' biggest edge. The young champion may be the strongest 154-pounder out there, although he doesn't bully opponents around too much. Marquez and Campas were both reputed as strength fighters who might be able to muscle him around, but

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Quartey vs. Vargas

(Continued from page 63)

Vargas had no real trouble with either man.

As he showed in the late rounds against Wright, Vargas can turn it up a notch as the fight goes on and pick up the pace when he needs. Whether it was due to Wright's unexpected aggression, the weight of his legal problems out of the ring, or other distractions, Vargas didn't appear to be in the same kind of shape for that fight as he has in other outings. You can bet he'll be in tip-top shape for the 30-year-old Quartey. He seems to get stronger and more confident as the fight progresses, and there's no reason to believe that's going to change now.

Quartey, on the other hand, has been shown to fade the longer the fight goes. Who can forget his final-round disaster against De La Hoya, which cost him a potential decision victory, or the way he crashed against Jose Luis Lopez in the late-going. Even Oba Carr was able to rally down the stretch before dropping a close decision. That's enough of a pattern to deduce that stamina isn't Quartey's strong suit.

Even so, at 147 pounds Quartey had the strength of a bull in the early rounds. Even De La Hoya had trouble getting him to take a backward step, and the African's thick legs and well-muscled torso give him a base for strength and power. He claimed that the late swoons came in large part because of the struggle to make the welterweight limit, so the move up to junior middleweight may work in his favor. On the other hand, he appeared to be close to the 200-pound range before signing for the fight, and was still very heavy after being in camp for several weeks.

Any way you cut it, Vargas gets the nod in this category. He is the naturally bigger man, has the edge in youth, and has shown himself to be a strong fighter in the late rounds.

THE INTANGIBLES

The biggest X-factors in this fight are Quartey's layoff and how he will handle the jump to 154 pounds. He enters his first fight as a junior middleweight without the benefit of so much as a tuneup. He elected to sit on the sidelines waiting for a big payday rather than keep his skills sharp with some easy ring work that could have given him a chance to adjust to the new weight class. That attitude may cost him in this fight. One can't help but wonder what kind of rust Quartey bring to the ring after being out for a full 14 months.

Vargas, of course, has managed to create trouble for himself outside the ring, and those matters are hard to put behind even in the isolation of training camp. Like James Toney several years ago, this may be a case of a guy who needs to stay in the ring all the time to stay out of trouble. A busy fight schedule is probably the best way to keep his time occupied with worthwhile pursuits, as Vargas has proven himself to be a somewhat combustible commodity. A challenge like the Quartey fight should get his full attention.

Quartey certainly has the edge in experience. He has more total fights and more title fights, although he feasted on less-than-qualified WBA contenders before stepping up to fight the likes of Vince Phillips, Carr, Lopez, and De La Hoya. Those fights, however, have put him in the spotlight and given him a chance to learn to cope with the pressure of fighting on the big stage. Vargas has been in some reasonably high-profile fights for a relative newcomer, but he can't match Quartey's resume. He has shown he can rise to the occasion when called upon to do so, but he hasn't been in this kind of fight before.

THE OUTCOME

Vargas would seem to be the logical pick. He's a fighter on the rise and he's comfortable at 154 pounds. Quartey certainly has the frame to carry the weight, but he hasn't had time to grow into the junior middleweight ranks and hasn't done the kinds of things one would like to see him do to prepare for this kind of test.

The early rounds will probably be something of a chess match, with each feeling the other out and probing to see how the other will react. Once the action begins to heat up and the rounds begin to pass, the edge will shift to Vargas. Look for a successful defense by the youngster, probably via decision. ■

BOXING COLLECTOR'S NOTEBOOK

By Don Scott

Collectors alert: If you prowl the Internet auction sites like I do, you must be as puzzled as I am by all the autographed boxing material on the net these days. One particularly curious item is the multi-signed glove or trunks. You've seen them: "Six heavyweight champions on one glove!" Did you ever ask yourself where and when anyone could have possibly gotten so many champs to sign one item?

The "where and when" questions are two you should definitely ask—and you'd better get the answer in writing. Say, for instance, there is an item that the seller claims was signed by Muhammad Ali, George Foreman, Larry Holmes, Mike Tyson, and others. These guys don't normally hang out together, so it's vital to ascertain when and where each of them signed. If the signatures are legitimate, the seller should at least have some travel records they can refer to in order to help prove authenticity.

And what about the exalted "COA," the Certificate of Authentication? Well, it should be signed by the person who obtained the autograph, not by somebody acting as a broker for the seller. The COA should say where, when, and under what circumstances the item was signed. You should also have the right to contact the person who obtained the signature.

For example, if you buy an Archie Moore autograph from Newport Marketing, you can be certain that Jerry Haack will tell you exactly when Moore signed or that he got it from Moore's widow, as Haack is the authorized agent of Moore's estate. Jim Stinson, of Stinson Sports, has photos of the fighters signing at the private sessions he arranges, and will gladly give you the particulars.

Some dealers guarantee their autographs "for life." But how this is interpreted varies widely. Does that mean the dealer's life or yours? Does it mean you can get your money back anytime you want or only after you have convinced the dealer that the article in question is bogus?

Here's another tip: I have obtained many multi-signed items at the International Boxing Hall of Fame in Canastota, New York, and I've never seen all the fighters sign their names in a neatly spaced order, with all of the signatures written in letters of approximately the same height. From my experience, the signatures are randomly placed all over the item in various sizes. And don't let anyone kid you that they got a Tyson signature at the IBHOF. He's never been there!

Collectors alert number two: This is more an honest mistake than a fraud. Many years ago (probably in the 1920s), someone produced a photograph of a signed photo of Jack Johnson, making it what we call "second generation." From time to time, this shot is sold as a "first generation" signed photo. I saw four of these sold during '99. All but one was advertised appropriately as second generation. The one advertised as real was in an Internet auction.

Here's how you tell the difference between this second generation Johnson photo and a genuine autographed photo of the first black heavyweight champion: The finish of a second generation photo is such that the signature seems to jump off the item the same way an actual signature does. But a second generation signature is *in* the photo, not *on* it. The second generation photo of Johnson in question is a 5" x 8" fight pose, and Johnson has signed it vertically, so that you would have to turn it sideways to read the signature. Another clue is that Johnson wrote "heavy" on one line and "weight" on another.

The bottom line is that a 5" x 8" first generation signed photo of "The Galveston Giant" would cost several hundred dollars, while the second generation photo is only worth $20-$30.

I'll have further collectors alerts in my next column. In the meantime, *e-caveat e-emptor*. ■

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WORLDWIDE RATINGS

The ratings of the three major governing bodies recognized by The Ring are supplied by the organizations themselves. They are updated on these pages as soon as they are made available to us. In this issue, the WBA ratings were complied as of November 1999, the WBC as of December 1999, and the IBF as of September 1999.

HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Lennox Lewis (GB)	C	C	–
Evander Holyfield (USA)	3	2	C
John Ruiz (USA)	1	3	3
Michael Grant (USA)	2	6	–
Wladimir Klitchko (UKR)	4	5	–
David Tua (NZ)	5	7	1
Larry Donald (USA)	6	9	4
Henry Akinwande (GB)	7	1	6
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	8	–	–
Andrew Golota (POL)	9	–	10
Shannon Briggs (USA)	10	–	–
Oleg Maskaev (UKR)	14	4	–
Derrick Jefferson (USA)	27	8	–
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	–	10	8
Vacant	–	–	2
Hasim Rahman (USA)	16	–	5
Chris Byrd (USA)	20	–	7
Danell Nicholson (USA)	–	–	9

CRUISERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Juan Carlos Gomez (CUBA)	C	–	–
Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)	–	C	–
Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)	–	–	C
Saul Montana (MEX)	1	1	1
James Toney (USA)	2	–	10
Imamu Mayfield (USA)	3	5	4
Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)	4	–	–
Alex Gonzalez (PR)	5	7	–
Andre Purlette (GUY)	6	8	5
Torsten May (GER)	7	9	3
Virgil Hill (USA)	8	2	–
Dale Brown (CAN)	9	11	8
Lou Del Valle (USA)	10	–	–
Valery Vikhor (LAT)	–	3	12
Alexander Gurov (UKR)	–	4	–
Akim Tafer (FRA)	–	6	–
Arthur Williams (USA)	17	10	6
Alex Gonzales (USA)	–	–	2
Napoleon Tagoe (USA)	12	–	7
Terry Dunstan (GB)	20	–	9

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Roy Jones (USA)	C	C	C
Michael Nunn (USA)	1	9	–
Clinton Woods (GB)	2	12	–
David Telesco (USA)	3	2	8
Hisashi Teraji (JAP)	4	–	–
Eric Harding (USA)	5	6	9
Reggie Johnson (USA)	6	–	5
Yawe Davis (ITA)	7	–	–
Antonio Tarver (USA)	8	–	1
Greg Wright (USA)	9	–	–
Thomas Ulrich (GER)	10	–	–
Richard Hall (USA)	–	1	–
Lou Del Valle (USA)	–	3	7
Frank Liles (USA)	–	4	–
Derrick Harmon (USA)	13	5	–
Glenn Kelly (AUSTRL)	11	7	4
Timo Masua (NZ)	–	8	–
Jorge Castro (ARG)	15	10	–
Vacant	–	–	2
Muhammad Siluvangi (ZAI)	–	–	3
Will Taylor (USA)	–	–	6
Lee Osie (SPA)	24	–	10

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Markus Beyer (GER)	C	–	–
Byron Mitchell (USA)	–	C	–
Sven Ottke (GER)	–	–	C
Glenn Catley (GB)	1	–	–
David Starie (GB)	2	6	6
Eric Lucas (CAN)	3	4	11
Zafarou Ballogou (TOGO)	4	7	3
Richie Woodhall (GB)	5	–	–
Mario Velt (GER)	6	3	9
Frank Liles (USA)	7	–	–
Omar Sheika (USA)	8	–	–
Dana Rosenblatt (USA)	9	–	–
Charles Brewer (USA)	10	10	1
Bruno Girard (FRA)	–	1	5
Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)	12	2	–
Manuel Siacca (PR)	–	5	–
Mike Makata (NZ)	–	8	–
Fredric Alvarez (SWE)	24	9	–
Thomas Tate (USA)	–	11	2
Glenn Johnson (USA)	–	–	4
Bryant Brannon (USA)	–	–	7
Tocker Pudwill (USA)	–	–	8
Sam Leuii (AUSTRL)	–	–	10

MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Keith Holmes (USA)	C	–	–
William Joppy (USA)	–	C	–
Bernard Hopkins (USA)	–	–	C
Robert McCracken (GB)	1	8	3
Hassine Cherifi (FRA)	2	–	9
Kevin Palmer (USA)	3	–	–
Erland Betare (FRA)	4	–	–
Davide Ciarlante (ITA)	5	–	–
Howard Eastman (GB)	6	2	11
Lonnie Bradley (USA)	7	–	–
Johnson Tshuma (ZIM)	8	12	12
Ali Ennebati (FRA)	9	–	8
Stephane Ouelette (CAN)	10	–	–
Rito Ruvalcaba (MEX)	17	1	7
Winky Wright (USA)	–	3	–
Antwun Echols (USA)	–	4	–
Darren Obah (AUSTRL)	–	5	–
Julio Cesar Green (DR)	–	6	–
Ramon Moyano (ARG)	16	7	–
Dana Rosenblatt (USA)	–	9	–
Davey Hilton (CAN)	–	10	4
Antwun Echols (USA)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Brian Barbosa (USA)	13	–	5
Andrew Council (USA)	18	–	6
Syd Vanderpool (CAN)	23	–	10

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Francisco Castillejo (SPA)	C	–	–
David Reid (USA)	–	C	–
Fernando Vargas (USA)	–	–	C
Tony Marshall (USA)	1	–	–
Mamadou Thiam (FRA)	2	1	–
Roman Karmazin (RUS)	3	8	–
Anthony Jones (USA)	4	10	–
Laurent Boudouani (FRA)	5	2	11
Tony Badea (ROM)	6	–	–
Alfred Ankamah (GHA)	7	–	–
Kevin Kelly (USA)	8	3	–
Akira Ohigashi (JAP)	9	–	–
Carl Daniels (USA)	10	12	7
Jose Luis Lopez (MEX)	–	4	–
Jose Flores (MEX)	–	5	–
Rodney Jones (USA)	14	6	10
Raul Frank (GUY)	–	7	–
Marcos Avendano (VEN)	–	9	–
Winky Wright (USA)	–	–	1
Ross Thompson (USA)	27	–	2
Earnie Artango (AUSTRL)	28	–	3
Bronco McKart (USA)	17	–	4
Emmett Linton (USA)	–	11	5
Yory Boy Campas (MEX)	19	–	6
Marshall Simpson (GUY)	–	–	8
Raul Marquez (USA)	–	–	9

WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Felix Trinidad (PR)	C	–	C
James Page (USA)	–	C	–
Oscar De La Hoya (USA)	1	1	–
Derrell Coley (USA)	2	–	7
Shane Mosley (USA)	3	–	2
Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)	4	5	11
Vernon Forrest (USA)	5	6	4
Nicolas Cervera (COL)	6	11	–
Hector Camacho Jr (USA)	7	–	–
Kofi Jantuah (GHA)	8	–	–
Carlos Baldomir (ARG)	9	10	–
Andrei Pestraiev (RUS)	10	3	–
Andrew Lewis (GUY)	24	2	–
Michael Trabant (GERE)	25	4	–
Ike Quartey (GHA)	–	7	5
Oba Carr (USA)	14	8	6
Jeff Malcolm (AUS)	–	9	–
Raul Frank (USA)	–	–	1
Michael Covington (USA)	–	–	3
Sam Garr (USA)	16	–	8
Hugo Pineda (COL)	–	–	9
Sean Sullivan (AUSTRL)	–	–	10

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)	C	–	–
Sharmba Mitchell (USA)	–	C	–
Terron Millett (USA)	–	–	C
Julio Cesar Chavez (MEX)	1	–	–

Oktay Urkal (TUR)	2	–	7
Diobelis Hurtado (CUB)	3	7	–
Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	4	2	–
Jongkil Kim (KOR)	5	–	–
Thomas Damgaard (DEN)	6	3	–
Ahmed Santos (USA)	7	–	–
Mikhail Krivolapov (RUS)	8	–	–
Vince Phillips (USA)	9	–	8
Mickey Ward (USA)	10	11	–
Hector Camacho Jr (PR)	–	1	6
Khalid Rahilou (FRA)	–	4	–
Fred Pendleton (USA)	–	5	–
Gabriel Mapuoka (FRA)	21	6	11
Junichi Ono (JAP)	–	8	–
Elio Ortiz (VEN)	–	9	–
Demetrio Ceballos (PAN)	–	10	–
Zab Judah (USA)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Jan Bergman (SA)	–	–	3
Allan Vester (DEN)	23	–	4
Cesar Leiva (ARG)	19	–	5
Hector Lopez (USA)	–	–	9
Ray Oliveira (USA)	–	–	10

LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Steve Johnston (USA)	C	–	–
Gilbert Serrano (VEN)	–	C	–
Paul Spadafora (USA)	–	–	C
Lawrence Ngobeni (SA)	1	–	–
Cesar Bazan (MEX)	2	–	–
Lovemore Ndou (SA)	3	–	7
Yong Soo Choi (KOR)	4	–	–
Hiroyuki Sakamoto (JAP)	5	–	–
Billy Schwer (GB)	6	–	3
Rick Yoshimura (JAP)	7	5	–
Victoriano Damian Sosa (DR)	8	–	–
Daomai Sithkodam (THAI)	9	–	–
Oscar Garcia Cano (SPA)	10	3	–
Vacant	–	1	2
Alberto Sicurella (ARG)	12	2	–
Julien Lorcy (FRA)	–	4	–
Stefano Zoff (ITA)	–	6	–
Jean-Baptiste Mendy (FRA)	13	7	–
Golden Johnson (USA)	–	8	–
Miguel Calist (PAN)	–	9	–
Raul Balbi (ARG)	–	10	–
Billy Irwin (CAN)	20	–	1
Israel Cardona (USA)	–	–	4
Renato Cornett (AUS)	–	–	5
George Scott (SWE)	–	–	6
Ivan Robinson (USA)	11	–	8
Joel Perez (USA)	–	–	9
Stephane Smith (GB)	–	–	10

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Floyd Mayweather (USA)	C	–	–
Jongkwon Baek (KOR)	–	C	–
Robert Garcia (USA)	9	12	C
Goyo Vargas (MEX)	1	–	–
Jesus Chavez (USA)	2	–	–
Derrick Gainer (USA)	3	5	2
Sirimongkol Singmanassuk (THAI)	4	–	–
Kengo Nagashima (JAP)	5	–	–
Dennis Holbaek (DEN)	6	7	9
Tiger Ari (PHIL)	7	–	–
Carlos Hernandez (EL SALV)	8	–	–
Lakva Sim (MON)	10	2	–
Joel Casamayor (CUB)	–	1	–
Yodsanan Nanthachai (THAI)	–	3	–
Yong Soo Choi (KOR)	–	4	–
Tontcho Tontchev (BUL)	22	6	–
Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)	–	8	–
Ernesto Zepeda (MEX)	27	9	–
Kyuchul Choi (KOR)	–	10	–
Diego Corrales (USA)	–	–	1
Carlos Gerena (PR)	18	–	3
Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)	–	–	4
Carlos Hernandez (USA)	–	–	5
Santos Rebolledo (VEN)	–	–	6
Harold Warren (USA)	–	–	7
John Brown (USA)	–	–	8
David Santos (USA)	–	–	10

FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Naseem Hamed (GB)	C	–	–
Fred Norwood (USA)	–	C	–
Manuel Medina (MEX)	18	–	C
Luisito Espinosa (PHIL)	1	8	–
Guty Espadas (MEX)	2	–	–
Injin Chi (KOR)	3	–	–
Cesar Soto (MEX)	4	–	–
Tony Wehbee (AUS)	5	–	11
Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)	6	–	–
Edgar Barcenas (MEX)	7	–	–
Istvan Kovacs (HUN)	8	6	–
Takeo Imaoka (JAP)	9	–	–
Augie Sanchez (USA)	10	–	12
Pablo Chacon (ARG)	–	1	5
Nana Konadu (GHA)	–	2	–
Victor Polo (COL)	–	3	–
Angel Vasquez (PR)	–	4	8
Philip Ndou (SA)	–	5	–
Frederic Perez (FRA)	21	7	–
Richard Carrillo (VEN)	–	9	–
Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)	14	10	–
Vuyani Bungu (SA)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Mbulelo Botile (SA)	–	–	3
Oscar Larios (MEX)	–	–	4
Jesus Chavez (USA)	–	–	6
Tracy Patterson (USA)	–	–	7
Hector Lizarraga (USA)	–	–	9
Frankie Toledo (USA)	–	–	10

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Erik Morales (MEX)	C	–	–
Nestor Garza (MEX)	–	C	–
Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)	–	–	C
Michael Brodie (GB)	1	7	3
Willie Jorrin (USA)	2	–	7
Sergei Devakov (UKR)	3	–	–
Oscar Larios (MEX)	4	–	–
Wayne McCullough (IRE)	5	–	–
Reynante Jamili (PHIL)	6	–	–
John Johnson (USA)	7	8	10
Salim Medjkoune (FRA)	8	–	12
Clarence Adams (USA)	9	–	–
Enrique Sanchez (MEX)	10	5	–
Antonio Cermeno (VEN)	–	1	–
Vladislav Antonov (RUS)	22	2	8
Bugiarso (INDO)	–	3	–
Yobert Ortega (VEN)	–	4	–
Jose Luis Valbuena (VEN)	–	6	–
Guty Espadas (MEX)	–	9	–
Jose Rojas (VEN)	–	10	–
Ernesto Gray (COL)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Andrian Kaspari (INDO)	–	–	4
Jesus Salud (USA)	–	–	5
Jason Pires (USA)	–	–	6
Sean Fletcher (USA)	–	–	9

BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Veerapol Sahaprom (THAI)	C	–	–
Paul Ayala (USA)	–	C	–
Tim Austin (USA)	–	–	C
Adan Vargas (MEX)	1	2	7
Hugo Dianzo (MEX)	2	10	–
Cuauhtemoc Gomez (MEX)	3	7	–
Jess Maca (PHIL)	4	11	–
Manny Pacquiao (PHIL)	5	–	–
Gerardo Martinez (MEX)	6	–	–
Nana Konadu (GHA)	7	–	4
Ricardo Barajas (MEX)	8	–	–
Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)	9	–	–
Keiji Yamaguchi (JAP)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	–
Johnny Tapia (USA)	–	3	–
Sahoiu Sithchai Condo (THAI)	–	4	–
Johnny Bredahl (DEN)	11	5	6
Danny Romero (USA)	–	6	–
Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)	–	8	–
Rafael Marquez (MEX)	16	9	–
Bernardo Mendoza (CHI)	–	–	1
Jesus Perez (COL)	23	–	2
Jose Mendoza (COL)	–	–	3
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	13	–	5
Arthur Johnson (USA)	15	–	8
Pedro Rincon (COL)	–	–	9
Mauricio Martinez (PAN)	–	–	10

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
In Joo Cho (KOR)	C	–	–
Hideki Todaka (JAP)	–	C	–
Mark Johnson (USA)	–	–	C
Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)	1	11	3
Joel Luna Zarate (MEX)	2	9	–
Eric Morel (USA)	3	–	–
Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)	4	3	10
Heriberto Ruiz (MEX)	5	–	11
Genaro Garcia (MEX)	6	–	–
Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)	7	–	–
Masanori Tokuyama (JAP)	8	–	–
Seungrok Choi (KOR)	9	–	–
Trinidad Mendoza (MEX)	10	–	–
Leo Gamez (VEN)	–	1	–
Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	–	2	4
Jesus Rojas (VEN)	21	4	–
Edison Torres (VEN)	–	5	–
Felix Machado (VEN)	–	6	2
Jesper Jensen (DEN)	–	7	–
Akihigo Nago (JAP)	–	8	–
Lester Fuentes (NIC)	22	10	–
Julio Gamboa (NIC)	27	–	1
Ratanachai Sor Voraphin (THAI)	19	–	5
Samson 3K-Battery (THAI)	–	–	6
Jose Rafael Sosa (ARG)	–	–	7
Evangelo Perez (PAN)	–	–	8
Med Lukchaopormasak (THAI)	–	–	9

FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Medgoen 3K Battery (THAI)	C	–	–
Sornpichai Kratchingdaeng (THAI)	–	C	–
Irene Pacheco (COL)	–	–	C
Chatchai Sasakul (THAI)	1	–	–
Alex Ali Baba (GHA)	2	–	11
David Guerault (FRA)	3	5	1
Gabriel Mira (MEX)	4	–	–
Mike Trejo (USA)	5	12	4
Oscar Arciniega (MEX)	6	–	–
Saen Sor Ploenchit (THAI)	7	–	–
Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)	8	–	–
Isidro Garcia (USA)	9	–	8
Raul Juarez (MEX)	10	–	–
Jose Bonilla (VEN)	–	1	–
Gilberto Gonzalez (VEN)	–	2	10
Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)	–	3	–
Panieng Okuda (THAI)	–	4	–
Eric Morel (USA)	–	6	–
Hugo Soto (ARG)	–	7	–
Jose Lopez (VEN)	–	8	–
Gabriel Munoz (MEX)	–	9	–
Gilberto Keb Baas (MEX)	12	10	–
Pedro Pena (USA)	28	–	2
Ferid Ben Jeddou (TUN)	–	–	3
Alejandro Montiel (MEX)	–	11	5
Fernando Montiel (MEX)	–	–	6
Gerson Guerrero (MEX)	17	–	7
Zoltan Lunka (TUR)	21	–	9

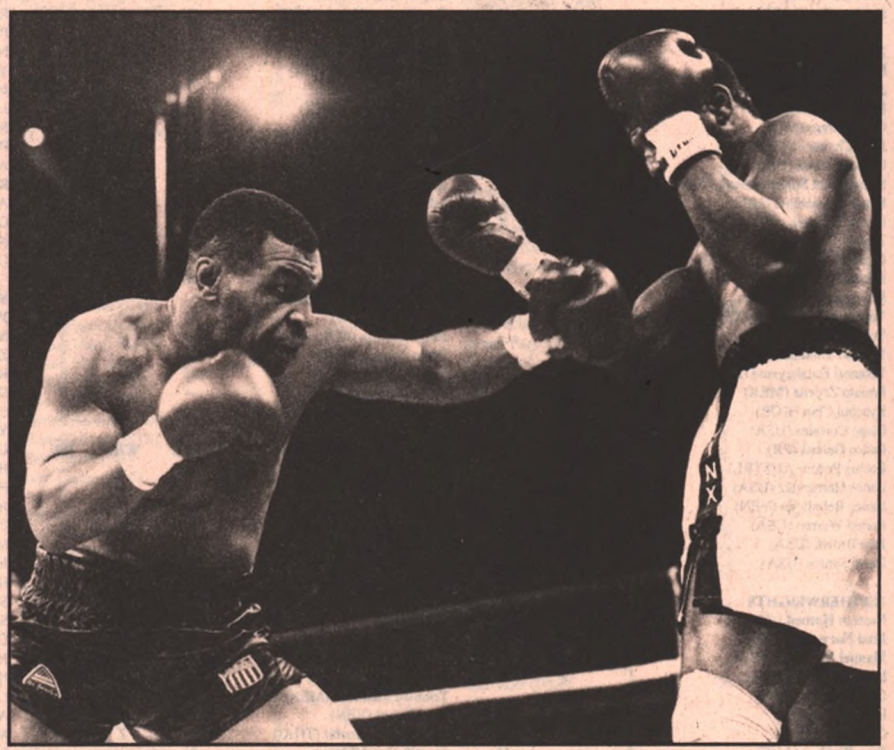
JR. FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Yosam Choi (KOR)	C	–	–
Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (THAI)	–	C	–
Will Grigsby (USA)	–	11	C
Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)	1	3	–
Jorge Arce (MEX)	2	9	–
Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)	3	–	–
Hidenobu Honda (JAP)	4	2	–
Panieng Sasiprabha (THAI)	5	–	–
Bebis Mendoza (COL)	6	–	–
Ridchichai Kiatprabhas (THAI)	7	–	–
Sangik Yang (KOR)	8	–	–
Jose Luis Zepeda (MEX)	9	–	–
Eric Ortiz (MEX)	10	–	–
Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)	–	1	2
Pongsaklek Nakornton (THAI)	–	4	–
Nelson Dieppa (DR)	13	5	7
Yura Dimas (MON)	–	6	–
Jose Sanjuanelo (COL)	–	7	–
Jake Matlala (SA)	–	8	–
Ratanapol Sor Vorapin (THAI)	–	10	4
Pedro Rodriguez (COL)	–	–	1
Anis Roga (INDO)	–	–	3
Ricardo Lopez (MEX)	–	–	5
Asdrubal Velasquez (COL)	–	–	6
Osvaldo Guerrero (MEX)	11	–	8
Medngon 3K Battery (THAI)	–	–	9
Carlos Murillo (PAN)	–	–	10

STRAWWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Wandee Chor Chareon (THAI)	C	–	–
Noel Arumbulet (VEN)	–	C	–
Zolani Petelo (SA)	–	–	C
Jose Antonio Aguirre (MEX)	1	10	–
Daniel Reyes (COL)	2	6	6
Erdene Chuluun (MON)	3	–	–
Yasuo Tokimitsu (JAP)	4	–	–
Udomdet Porpaoin (THAI)	5	8	–
Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)	6	–	8
Fernando Luna (MEX)	7	–	–
Jaewon Kim (KOR)	8	–	–
Chartchai Nokornton-Parkview (THAI)	9	–	–
Makoto Suzuki (JAP)	10	–	–
Jose Garcia (COL)	–	1	–
Hurricane Chulun (IND)	–	2	–
Songkram Porpaoin (THAI)	–	3	–
Satoru Abe (JAP)	14	4	–
Chana Porpaoin (THAI)	–	5	–
Joma Gamboa (PHIL)	–	7	–
Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)	17	9	–
Luis Lazarte (ARG)	–	–	1
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	13	–	2
Mickey Cantwell (GB)	–	–	3
Rocky Palma (JAP)	–	–	4
Faisol Akbar (INDO)	–	–	5
Alberto Rossel (PERU)	–	–	7
Rocky Lim (TWN)	–	–	9
Juan Herrera (COL)	–	–	10

CLASSIC

WHAT PRICE GLORY?

Tyson Threatens To Retire As Personal Problems Overshadow Spinks Victory



Mike Tyson bears in on Michael Spinks in a title showdown that was supposed to determine the best heavyweight in the world. Amid tabloid-type news constantly swirling around him, Tyson made a devastating 91-second statement that there was no one better.

From THE RING, October 1988

By Nigel Collins

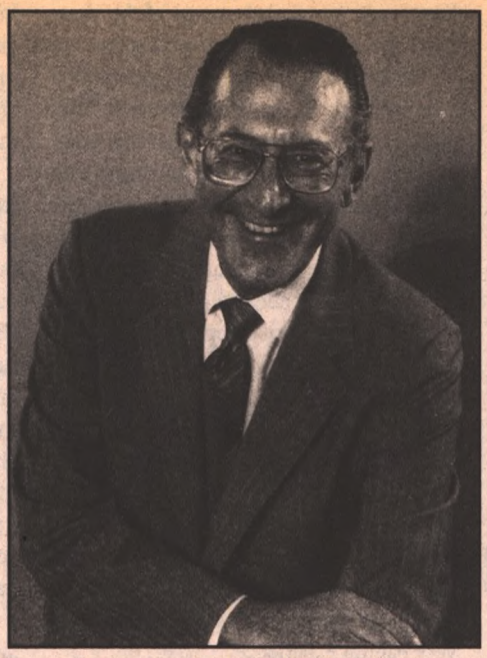
Something is dreadfully wrong in Camelot.

The newly crowned warrior king, his domain lying in chaos at his sockless feet, has threatened to abdicate the throne. His queen, booed by her not-so-loyal subjects on the very night of her husband's coronation, stands accused, along with the queen mother, of being more interested in the crown jewels than the head on which they rest.

His two beloved mentors gone to their eternal reward, the king knows not who to trust as warring factions battle to gain favor in his court. Only on the field of combat, where he controls his own destiny by the power of his hand, can the mighty monarch find a kind of peace.

But what should have been the sovereign's shining moment degenerated into a sideshow, lost in the whirlwind of controversy that enveloped both his professional and personal life. Yet, despite the turmoil raging back at the palace, the king rode forth and dispatched his foe, shedding nary a drop of sweat in the process. And with this deed did prove he was indeed the "best fighter on the planet."

Now, like Ulysses returned from the Trojan wars, our king is faced with the always unpleasant task of cleaning his own castle. For like men of action throughout the ages, he has discovered that the dragons that dwell in one's own soul are always the most difficult to slay.



Bill Cayton, Tyson's manager at the time, was served a lawsuit at ringside prior to the fight. Tyson, at the urging of his wife, actress Robin Givens, tried to get out of his contract with Cayton and sign with Don King.

Of course, the life and times of Mike Tyson is not a medieval folktale. It's very much a story of today. It's a story that has transcended the pages of THE RING and become the focal point for practically every publication from the sleaziest supermarket tabloid to *Time* magazine. In the months leading up to his showdown with Michael Spinks, the world simply couldn't get enough sordid details about Tyson's domestic debris to satisfy its craving for the tawdry. Pile on his running feud with manager Bill Cayton, and there wasn't much room left to discuss the fight.

But the fight—and its immense purse—was the glue that bound the cast of characters together. For if Tyson was not the most destructive fistfighter on the face of the earth, capable of earning $20-million for 1½ minutes of controlled violence, he probably wouldn't be married to a beautiful actress named Robin Givens. And he certainly wouldn't be caught up in a power struggle between his new family, Cayton, and another King named Don.

Three days after the biggest victory of his 35-0 (31) career, Tyson celebrated his 22nd birthday by announcing his retirement from the ring. While nobody took Mike too seriously, the announcement is certainly indicative of the champion's troubled state of mind. Most observers agree Tyson is just burned out and looking for some time off and perhaps a way to wiggle out of his contract with Cayton, who might go for a buyout if faced with the prospect of a protracted dispute. But one thing is for sure: Fame and fortune has not made Tyson a happy man.

"I can't appreciate what you reporters did to me," said Tyson, minutes after dispatching Spinks, his normally high-pitched voice raising another half octave as he shook an accusing finger at the assembled press. "You tried to embarrass my family, you tried to disgrace them. Once I became vulnerable, you attacked the people I love, like my wife and my mother-in-law. That's the only way you can get to me. As far as I know, this might be my last fight."

Though it is difficult to know exactly when things started to come unraveled for Tyson, the death of co-manager and dear friend Jim Jacobs is as good a place to start as any. Cynics say Tyson's public image was only a product of Jacobs' creativity and marketing expertise and was doomed to fall apart when Jacobs died ear-

Givens was in the eye of the soap opera storm raging around Tyson. Rumors circulated before the fight that Givens and her mother, Ruth Roper, were manipulating Tyson and served as the driving force behind the heavyweight champ's split with Cayton.

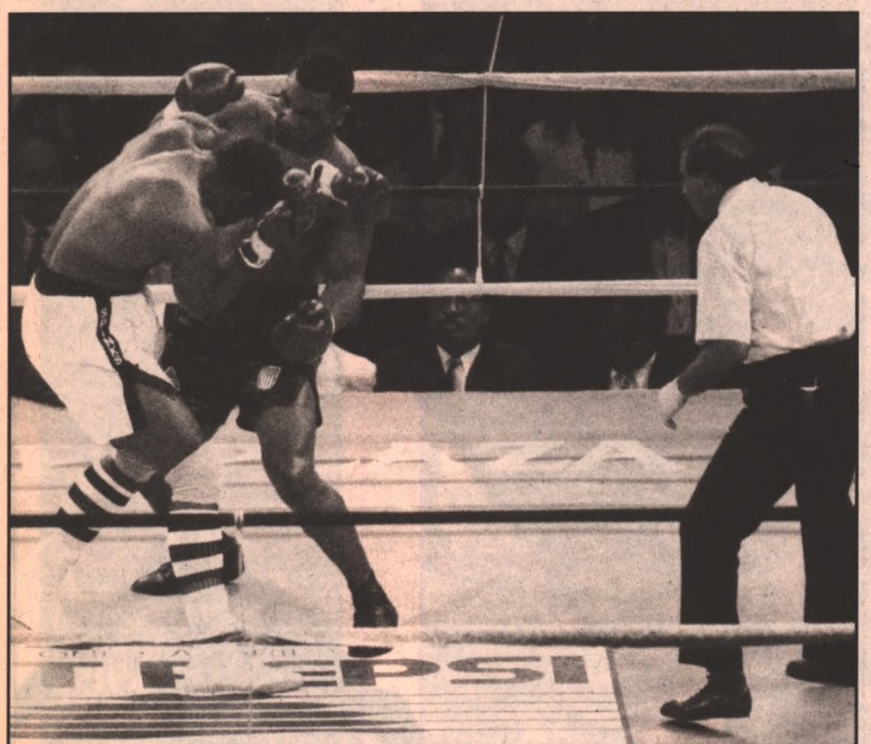
Spinks' flamboyant promoter/manager Butch Lewis tried to distract Tyson by insisting the champ re-bandage his hands in the locker room. The ploy, however, quickly backfired when the two fighters got into the ring.

lier this year. Others claim the problems began when Mike married Givens shortly before Jacobs' death, and that she and her mother, Ruth Roper, are golddiggers, scheming to steal Tyson away from Cayton in order to fleece the champ themselves. And all the while, in the background, circling like a hungry shark, is King, eager to take advantage of the situation and lure Tyson deeper into his lair.

However, Tyson is hardly blameless. According to his sister-in-law, Mike has physically and mentally abused his wife, kicked down a hotel room door, and trashed a movie set in a drunken rage. Even if these stories are a complete fabrication, nobody is denying Tyson tried to give away his Bentley to a couple of New York Port Authority cops when he was involved in a minor fender-bender in Manhattan—not exactly the act of a well-adjusted adult.

But let's give credit where credit is due. Despite the distractions and the soap opera atmosphere that surrounded his training camp, Tyson came through like a real pro. Once the bell rang, he was in his element and the guy in the other corner was in for a very painful experience.

Spinks, the guy in the other corner on June 27, was almost a forgotten man leading up to the fight. Though his status as the legitimate world champion was reinforced when THE RING championship belt was presented to him at the last formal press conference five days prior to the fight, it was his lone moment in the spotlight. Throughout the massive prefight build-up he was treated more like a bit player than the co-star.



Most felt Spinks, who raked in a $13-million purse, was joking when he said before the fight, "Please don't make me go in there." Not long after the opening bell, the two-division former champ's fears of Tyson were confirmed. "Iron Mike" pounced on him immediately.

Ironically, the way Spinks fought ultimately vindicated those who gave him the brush-off. His effort proved embarrassingly unworthy of his previous career ... not to mention his $13-million purse!

Tyson's personal and managerial problems were not the only hassles to receive widespread publicity. There was also a raging debate over how many rounds the match would be scheduled. It was the IBF's turn to officiate, and President Bob Lee wanted 15 rounds in accordance with his organization's rules. The ever-cooperative WBC and WBA insisted the bout be scheduled for no more than 12. Threats of title strippings ran rampant for weeks, but in the end, Lee and the IBF acquiesced, accepted a six-figure sanctioning fee, and gave the bout its dubious blessing.

While the "fight" turned out to be an artistic flop, it was a financial masterpiece. The live gate of $13-million, created by a crowd of 21,785, broke all existing records for a one-day sporting event, giving host Donald Trump a tidy profit even before the first dollar was wagered at any of his three Atlantic City casinos. And while closed-circuit and pay-per-view revenues were still being tallied at press time, all indications point toward the bout emerging as one of, if not the biggest boxing bonanza in history.

Unfortunately, never has so little cost so much. Practically everyone, with the possible exception of the Tyson camp, expected at least a tiny bit more.

Spinks brought an unblemished 31-0 (21) record into the fray and a reputation of upsetting the odds. After all, hadn't he accomplished, by winning the heavyweight championship, what no light heavyweight champion had ever accomplished before? Hadn't he also proved he was a legitimate heavyweight by pulverizing Gerry Cooney a little over a year ago? Wasn't he the only boxer capable of giving Tyson a decent fight? The answer to the first two questions are yes and maybe, but to the third, the reply has to be a resounding "NO!"

Those gathered inside Atlantic City's cavernous Convention Hall and the millions of television viewers around the globe were practically in a stupor by the time Tyson and Spinks entered the ring. King's marathon undercard was bad enough, but when Spinks' promoter, Butch Lewis, insisted Tyson re-bandage his

THE RING RATINGS, October 1988

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Mike Tyson, New Jersey
1. **Evander Holyfield,** Georgia
2. **Carl Williams,** New Jersey
3. **Tim Witherspoon,** Pennsylvania
4. **Tony Tucker,** Michigan
5. **Michael Spinks,** Missouri
6. **Adilson Rodrigues,** Brazil
7. **Donovan Ruddock,** Canada
8. **Michael Dokes,** Ohio
9. **Pinklon Thomas,** Michigan
10. **Johnny DuPlooy,** South Africa

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Charles Williams,** Ohio
2. **Virgil Hill,** North Dakota
3. **Dennis Andries,** England
4. **Don Lalonde,** Canada
5. **Tony Willis,** Illinois
6. **Bobby Czyz,** New Jersey
7. **Fulgencio Obelmejias,** Venezuela
8. **Chong-Pal Park,** Korea
9. **Lindell Holmes,** Michigan
10. **Graciano Rocchigiani,** Germany

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Sumbu Kalambay, Italy
1. **Frank Tate,** Texas
2. **Iran Barkley,** New York
3. **Michael Nunn,** California
4. **Thomas Hearns,** Michigan
5. **Herol Graham,** England
6. **Mike McCallum,** Jamaica
7. **Matthew Hilton,** Canada
8. **Gianfranco Rosi,** Italy
9. **Donald Curry,** Texas
10. **Julian Jackson,** Virgin Islands

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Lloyd Honeyghan, Eng.
1. **Marlon Starling,** Connecticut
2. **Simon Brown,** Washington, D.C.
3. **Maurice Blocker,** Washington, D.C.
4. **Mark Breland,** New York
5. **Jorge Vaca,** Mexico
6. **Rollin Williams,** Arizona
7. **Juan Martin Coggi,** Argentina
8. **Roger Mayweather,** Nevada
9. **James McGirt,** New York
10. **Meldrick Taylor,** Pennsylvania

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Julio Cesar Chavez,** Mexico
2. **Greg Haugen,** Washington
3. **Pernell Whitaker,** Virginia
4. **Jose Luis Ramirez,** Mexico
5. **Edwin Rosario,** Puerto Rico
6. **Vinny Pazienza,** Rhode Island
7. **Rocky Lockridge,** New Jersey
8. **Amancio Castro,** Colombia
9. **Azumah Nelson,** Ghana
10. **Primo Ramos,** Mexico

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Antonio Esparragoza, Venezuela
1. **Jeff Fenech,** Australia
2. **Calvin Grove,** Pennsylvania
3. **Marcos Villasana,** Mexico
4. **Juan Jose Estrada,** Mexico
5. **Jeff Franklin,** Nevada
6. **Hector Lopez,** Mexico
7. **Bernardo Pinango,** Venezuela
8. **Victor Callejas,** Puerto Rico
9. **Julio Gervacio,** Venezuela
10. **Jesse Benavides,** Arizona

Sumbu Kalambay

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Miguel Lora,** Colombia
2. **Khaosai Galaxy,** Thailand
3. **Kelvin Seabrooks,** South Carolina
4. **Gilberto Roman,** Mexico
5. **Raul Perez,** Mexico
6. **Khaokor Galaxy,** Thailand
7. **Santos Laciar,** Argentina
8. **Sugar Baby Rojas,** Colombia
9. **Wilfredo Vasquez,** Puerto Rico
10. **Orlando Canizales,** Texas

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Sot Chitalada, Thailand
1. **Jung-Koo Chang,** Korea
2. **Fidel Bassa,** Colombia
3. **Myung-Woo Yuh,** Korea
4. **Hilario Zapata,** Panama
5. **Rolando Bohol,** Philippines
6. **Gabriel Bernal,** Mexico
7. **Dodie Penalosa,** Philippines
8. **Ray Medel,** Texas
9. **Duke McKenzie,** England
10. **Miguel Mercedes,** Dominican Republic

hands, the delay dragged on and on. Soon, anticipation turned to apathy, and the fans, who had been in a festive mood earlier in the evening, were strangely quiet as referee Frank Cappuccino gave the fighters their final instructions.

Spinks, a career high 212¼, looked sick with worry as he waited passively for the opening bell. Most people figured he had been joking several months earlier when he begged, "Please don't make me go in there" at the press conference announcing the fight. When the moment of truth was at hand, his fear seemed genuine enough.

Tyson, on the other hand, looked eager to get it on as he limbered up in his corner. All of his worries temporarily set aside, he was more than ready to take out his frustrations on the man standing across the ring—though the kiss he gave Spinks after the damage was done indicated there was no real animosity.

It was no big surprise when Tyson, 218¼, charged out at the first bell and took the fight to Spinks. In fact, it would have been a shock if he had done anything else. Spinks, wearing supportive bandages on both knees, avoided Tyson's initial rush, but was soon in serious trouble.

Tyson stepped up the pressure and suddenly nailed Spinks flush with a savage left hook to the head. Spinks' brain was still trying to unscramble its circuits when

Lights out! Referee Frank Cappuccino counted out Spinks after Tyson connected with a booming right to Spinks' head. The 91-second blowout was actually the fastest bout ever in which the linear heavyweight title changed hands.

Tyson followed with a whistling right to the body. Spinks sank to the canvas as the crowd woke up with a collective yell.

Though he'd been punished with a couple of potent blows, Spinks quickly regained his feet and seemed in full control of his faculties as Cappuccino gave him the mandatory eight-count. At this juncture, it still seemed possible he would regroup and make a fight of it. However, appearances can be deceiving. Spinks was only seconds away from the first loss of his professional career.

Tyson charged again, and Spinks gamely tried to nail him coming in with a right of his own. But the "Spinks Jinx" sailed harmlessly over Tyson's ducking head, leaving Spinks wide open for a counter. Tyson obliged, ripping home a right of his own that connected with the right side of Spinks' turned face with enough force to end the fight.

Spinks went over backward, cracking his head on the floor as he fell. He rolled over halfway through the count and made it to his hands and knees before falling forward once again. Cappuccino's count was a formality. Spinks was done, and so was the fight, just 91 seconds after it began.

King had christened the fight "Once And For All," but maybe "One, And That's All" would have been more appropriate. It certainly wasn't boxing's finest hour. Heck, it wasn't even the best 91 seconds of the weekend. That came Saturday night when Hector Camacho got knocked on his leopard-skin diaper. But the fact that Tyson-Spinks turned out to be a mismatch is secondary. It was a fight that had to happen, a fight boxing needed to set the record straight and save the integrity of heavyweight championship genealogy.

Despite his obvious shortcomings once the fight started, Spinks, by virtue of his 1985 victory over Larry Holmes, held the most valid claim to the throne. It didn't matter that practically everybody conceded Tyson was the better fighter. He had to beat Spinks in the ring, not the Alphabet Boys' backroom, to claim the true title. Though the fight was a flop, boxing once again had an undisputed heavyweight champion whose lineage can be traced all the way back to John L. Sullivan.

(Lost in the rush to declare Tyson champion before he earned the title in the ring was one rather significant record: The 91 seconds he took to blitz Spinks was not the fourth fastest heavyweight title fight in history as was reported by countless writers and broadcasters. Instead, it was the quickest bout of all-time in which the heavyweight title changed hands).

QUOTE BOARD

Mike Tyson, commenting on Spinks' quick exit: "When I came into the ring, I could see the fear in his face and I knew it was gonna be a first-round knockout. I hurt him with the first punch I threw. He wobbled a little, but I knew he would try to fight back. There were only two things he could do: try to get lucky, or try to run around all night."

A bemused Michael Spinks, on what happened after the first knockdown: "I thought after getting hurt that he would try to press me and I'd catch him coming in. When I saw a shot I felt I could take, I took it. But I came up short and he hit me with the uppercut. It doesn't take a very hard punch to knock anybody out. You hit 'em in the right spot, everybody goes."

Spinks' trainer Eddie Futch, speaking of a fight plan that never had a chance to develop: "I expected Tyson to come out the way he did. He comes out that way for everybody. But I thought Michael would be able to handle it better than he did. I had planned for him to box more and show more movement."

Former heavyweight champion George Foreman, a veteran of five marriages, offering Tyson domestic counsel: "You can be dethroned in your home. A woman can bring you to your knees."

Bill Cayton, reacting to the lawsuit filed by Tyson in an attempt to break his contract with his manager: "I'm outraged at this lawsuit. I'm very disappointed in Mike. I though Mike would respect the memory of Jim Jacobs."

Jacobs' widow, Lorraine Jacobs, commenting on the same lawsuit: "I can't believe Mike would do this. It's disgusting."

Cayton's attorney, Tom Puccio, explaining the basis for Tyson's lawsuit: "Simply put, Tyson accuses Jacobs of fraudulently inducing him to sign his management contract by not telling him of his [Jacobs'] impending death."

Evander Holyfield, trying to sound tough in the wake of Spinks' rapid demise: "I'm not going to let a reputation whup me. I feel like he's got to prove it to me. Just because he beat someone else doesn't mean he can beat me."

Promoter Don King, addressing the problem of future opponents for Tyson: "Nature has a way of replenishing itself."

A final word from Spinks: "I was never that thrilled about getting in the ring with him."

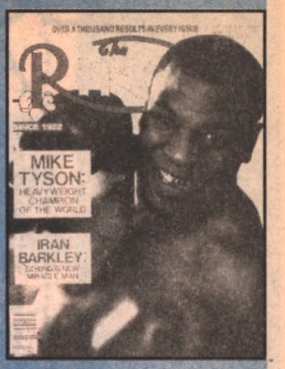
Tyson raises his arms and shows off his title belts. After his victory over Spinks, Tyson was heralded as an all-time great. One national phone-in poll voted Tyson the second-best heavyweight in history—right behind the legendary Muhammad Ali.

But at what price has boxing's honor been purchased? What will be the aftermath of a fight that promised (and cost) so much, yet delivered practically nothing in the way of competitive combat?

Tyson's scheduled defense against brittle-chinned Brit Frank Bruno in September will probably be postponed to accommodate the champ's sabbatical. Bruno was ringside for Spinks' execution, but few outside England are taking the big bloke's challenge too seriously. This will give Tyson time to iron out both his domestic and managerial difficulties. A brief absence from the ring will also give the paying customers a chance to wash the bad taste of the Spinks fight out of their mouths—and to refurbish their wallets.

The only fighter perceived as a legitimate challenger is Evander Holyfield. But that's a ways down the line. "The Real Deal" is at least a year away from risking his hide in such a perilous endeavor. But just because there's nobody around worth fighting, it doesn't mean the fans are any less enthralled with Tyson than before. In a readers' phone-in poll taken by *USA Today* two days after the fight, Tyson was voted boxing history's second-best heavyweight, right behind Muhammad Ali. So far, nobody has come close to proving that assessment wrong.

But for the time being, his subjects had better get used to reading more about their heavyweight king in the gossip columns than on the sports page. ■



The Cover: Mike Tyson was all over this issue. "Iron Mike" just turned 22 and was not only king of the ring, but seemed like he was king of the world after his career-defining, 91-second demolition of Michael Spinks. Tyson had strong crossover appeal during this time in his career, not only appearing on the cover of THE RING, but on other national publications as well.

In Memory Of Moore: THE RING remembered Davey Moore, the former WBA junior middleweight champion who was tragically killed when an unoccupied car rolled over him. The four-time New York Golden Gloves champ had tried two unsuccessful comebacks after losing the 154-pound title to Roberto Duran in 1983. His final record stood at 18-5 (14).

Kings Of Clout: THE RING took a look at some of boxing's big hitters, including Earnie Shavers, one of the heavyweight division's all-time hardest one-shot punchers. Shavers showed his power by destroying former heavyweight champ Ken Norton in one round in 1979.

Miracle Man: Bleeding from cuts above both eyes and very close to being stopped, Iran Barkley found Thomas Hearns' chin with a desperate punch, sending the WBC middleweight champ reeling. A minute later, huge underdog Barkley sent "The Hit Man" through the ropes to win a stunner and claim the title.

Fighter Of The Month: After his victory over Spinks, Tyson was being mentioned in the same elite class as heavyweight champions such as Muhammad Ali. He erased any doubt as to who was the best heavyweight in the world, and it appeared there was no one in the division who could pose Tyson a serious threat.

LOOKING AHEAD

By Eric Raskin

WILL "TOO SHARP" GET CUT IN ON THE ACTION?

Johnson: Aiming for Ayala

As boxing fans, we've waited a long time to see IBF junior bantamweight champ **Mark "Too Sharp" Johnson** in a serious, competitive fight, the kind of matchup where picking a winner wasn't automatic. The last time we thought there was even the slightest inkling of a chance that Johnson might be upset, he took all of 71 seconds to blow away **Arthur Johnson**. And let's face it: At 115 pounds, there's not a contender out there with a sizable American following or more than an outside chance of winning.

As Johnson knows, if there's no big game in your forest, you have to do your hunting elsewhere, which is why Too Sharp is preparing to bulk up a little bit in hopes of finally finding an opponent who can get him a paycheck befitting his immense talents. And as we were going to press, the buzz was just starting surrounding a matchup that has the ears of HBO, Top Rank, and Team Johnson: a meeting with WBA bantamweight champ **Paulie Ayala**, THE RING's 1999 Fighter of the Year.

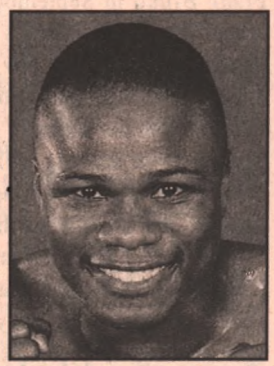
"I definitely want Ayala," said Johnson, 38-1 (26) with 1 no-contest. "I know HBO is interested. I know I'll beat him, but I don't expect it to be easy, which is why I want the fight. I want a guy who can challenge me. I tried for so long to get **Johnny Tapia** to fight me, but he wouldn't, so now I'd like to fight the guy who beat Johnny Tapia."

Unfortunately for Johnson, Ayala's people, though not dismissing the fight, aren't as hungry for it as Johnson is, so if it doesn't pan out—a pessimistic reality Johnson has learned to prepare for after watching nearly every fight he's ever wanted fall through—another option is a meeting with the winner of the **Erik Morales-Marco Antonio Barrera** fight, assuming the winner can be talked out of moving up to 126 pounds for a shot at **Naseem Hamed**. Either way, Too Sharp is going to be spending the next few months adding some poundage.

"We're gonna go in hiding for a while and build up to a good, strong 118- or 122-pounder," said **Ham Johnson**, the two-division champion's father and trainer. "By May, Mark will be more than ready as a '22-pounder. We don't lift weights, but we'll do it with controlling his diet.

"If we want to make money, we have to move up. There's no point in us having the belts if they don't make us money."

LISTEN UP



Forrest: Right back on HBO

As we went to press, IBF junior middleweight champ **Fernando Vargas** was close to signing a long-term deal with HBO reportedly worth in the neighborhood of $20-million. "Our deals are win-win deals for us," said HBO Sports Senior Vice President **Lou DiBella**. "Vargas beating **Ike Quartey** is only about a 55-45 shot to me, but if he beats Quartey, he's a star, and if he doesn't, then the deal doesn't go into effect" ... Welterweight contender **Vernon Forrest**, fresh off a solid but unspectacular performance in decisioning **Vince Phillips**, will fight in the co-feature on the Vargas-Quartey card, perhaps against **Jose Luis Lopez** or **Shannan Taylor**. "I think Vernon could have fought better against Vince," said DiBella, "but Vince is tough and he was in shape. I'd bet money you'll see a better Vernon on April 15" ... Assuming **Zab Judah** has captured the vacant IBF junior welter title by the time you read this, his first defense is pencilled in for April 8 on Showtime ... **Lennox Lewis** vs. **Michael Grant** might not be the only outstanding heavyweight matchup on the card at Madison Square Garden on April 29. Though the deal hadn't been sealed yet when we went to press, evenly matched top contenders **Kirk Johnson** and **Oleg Maskaev** were in negotiations to duke it out on that show ... It'll be **Luisito Espinosa** vs. **Guty Espadas** for the vacant WBC featherweight title, probably in former champ Espinosa's homeland, the Philippines, in April ... **Ray Leonard**. **Tommy Hearns**. **Roberto Duran**. **Pernell Whitaker**. **Leo Gamez**. Leo Gamez? That's right, Gamez, the former WBA 105-pound, 108-pound, and 112-pound champ, may be getting a chance to become only the fifth four-division titlist in boxing history, as an April bout with WBA super flyweight champion **Hideki Todaka** looks like a strong possibility. The 36-year-old Gamez would be considered a slight underdog against Todaka, who is 10 years his junior. ■

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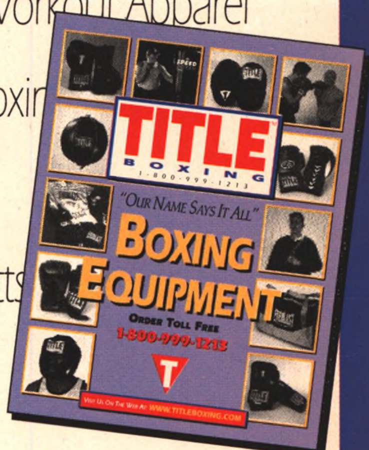

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